

Transcript

Secret State of North Korea

[VIEW FILM](#)

WRITTEN, PRODUCED AND DIRECTED BY

James Jones

JIRO ISHIMARU, Editor, Asia Press: [*on the phone*] [*subtitles*] Have you arrived? Where shall we meet? Oh, I see. OK, OK. 'Bye.

It's not looking good. The North Koreans can't get out.

NARRATOR: Jiro Ishimaru is a journalist trying to expose what Kim Jong Un's regime wants to hide, the secret world of the North Korean people. He has an undercover network which covertly films life inside the country.

JIRO ISHIMARU: [*through interpreter*] Obviously, it's an extremely dangerous thing to do. In North Korea, even filming everyday life is considered a form of political treason. If they're caught filming, they'd be locked up and may never be let out again.

NARRATOR: Even filming on the Chinese side of the border is illegal.

JIRO ISHIMARU: [*subtitles*] A barbed wire fence has been installed. It's high, isn't it? This was not here a year ago. It shows the (Chinese) government's determination to keep the defectors out. You can sense the psychological pressure they are starting to put on the North Koreans.

NARRATOR: The people who work for Jiro smuggle their footage across the Tumen River, which divides China from North Korea. The North Korean border guards have been known to shoot to kill.

The border has become even more tightly controlled since Kim Jong Un took over as Supreme Leader two years ago, the third ruler in the Kim dynasty after his father and grandfather. He inherited the world's most isolated country, where the people have no Internet and the state has almost total control on any information coming in or out.

Even with the tight security, Jiro and his Japanese news organization manage to get the footage out.

JIRO ISHIMARU: [*subtitles, in the car*] Let's get out here.

NARRATOR: He's going to meet one of his contacts, who's made it across the border with new images from North Korea.

JIRO ISHIMARU: [*subtitles*] I think you should turn off the camera when we're close. I'm going in there. Stop filming.

NARRATOR: They secretly film in areas no foreigners or journalists are allowed to visit. These are pictures Kim Jong Un doesn't want the world to see. Jiro has recruited a network of ordinary North Koreans living in towns across the country. They risk their lives to get the footage.

One of his contacts is a state employee, but has been smuggling footage out for five years. He agreed to speak if his identity was concealed.

"STATE EMPLOYEE": [*through interpreter*] This is dangerous. And if I get caught, I know I'd immediately be executed as a traitor to the Korean people. But I've got to do this. I've got to do this, no matter what. I'm just one person. Even if I have to sacrifice my life, someday something is going to change.

NARRATOR: The famine which killed more than a million North Koreans in the 1990s has ended. But the United Nations says the

country is still vulnerable to food shortages, and more than three quarters of the population don't have enough food to eat.

STREET CHILD: [*subtitles*] Please give us a little money. Please, just 10 cents.

NARRATOR: Over the past three years, Jiro's undercover network has filmed orphaned street kids gathering in the markets, begging for money and on the lookout for scraps of food. For the safety of the people filming, he disguises their voices.

[*subtitles*]

REPORTER: Who is this child?

WOMAN: An orphan. She's a child wandering around with no place to go.

REPORTER: Are you an orphan? How old are you?

1st CHILD: Eight.

REPORTER: How old are you?

2ndCHILD: Eight years old.

REPORTER: Eight years old? How did you end up here?

2ndCHILD: My mom tried to look after me, but she said it was too hard, so I left, and now I live outside.

REPORTER: Gosh. I'm so sorry for you. Here, buy something to eat with this.

NARRATOR: Very few of these orphaned children manage to escape North Korea, but we found one who did. He asked to be identified as "Lee" and agreed to speak to us anonymously.

"LEE": [*through interpreter*] My father passed away when I was 3. And then my mother left home and didn't return. I was very hungry. I was almost always hungry when I was young. There were times when I ate

a meal a day. But when I starved, I didn't eat for two days. Because I was hungry, I stole and picked pockets. I lived like that until I was 14 years old. There were many others. And there were children who starved to death.

INTERVIEWER: Did any of your friends die?

"LEE": Yes, they did.

INTERVIEWER: How old were you all then?

"LEE": I was about 11.

NARRATOR: Undercover footage from last March shows a group of homeless orphans trying to stay warm in below-zero temperatures.

[*subtitles*]

REPORTER: Does anyone here work so you can have food and a bed?

CHILD: What work do you mean?

REPORTER: Do you know how to chop wood?

CHILD: I don't have an arm, so I can't.

REPORTER: You don't have an arm? Why don't you have an arm?

CHILD: It got cut off by a train.

NARRATOR: There is an elite in the capital city, Pyongyang, and despite tough international sanctions, they live a comfortable life with the latest luxury goods. This woman was filmed getting into a newly imported Mercedes on her wedding day.

North Korean State TV makes the country out to be a land of plenty. They show pictures of an advanced economy, happy, well-fed children and shops overflowing with goods. Pyongyang's Department Store Number 1 is stocked with imported products from around the world. But as Jiro's footage shows, many of the items are not for sale.

[subtitles]

REPORTER: When will those clothes be for sale?

STORE CLERK: None of these products are for sale.

REPORTER: I can't buy anything?

STORE CLERK: These are only products for display.

REPORTER: Do you sell Daedongang beer?

STORE CLERK: Sorry?

REPORTER: Do you sell Daedongang beer?

STORE CLERK: We don't have anything to sell.

REPORTER: What are these, then? Aren't they for sale now?

STORE CLERK: No.

NARRATOR: The department store is regularly featured on state TV, which tells its people they live in the best country on earth.

One of the regime's senior propagandists defected and is now living in the South.

JANG JIN-SUNG, Former Propagandist: [*through interpreter*] As well as a physical dictatorship, they oppress people with an emotional dictatorship. In North Korea, they promote the leader to be the sun. If you go too close, you burn. If you go too far, you freeze to death. You think of him as incredibly god-like. We thought he didn't even go to the toilet.

NARRATOR: North Koreans can't escape the omnipresent propaganda. Kim Jong Un's speeches are pumped from speakers on street corners. This one was on a loop for three months, promising his people a bright economic future.

Since the North and the South split in the late 1940s, hatred of America has been central to North Korean indoctrination. This government video shows a North Korean dreaming of New York City being destroyed by a missile attack.

ANDREI LANKOV, Author, *The Real North Korea*: The average North Korean believes a significant part of the anti-American propaganda. They believe that Americans are ready to invade. They believe that America is a threat. They believe that Americans started the Korean war in order to enslave or maybe commit large-scale genocide in Korea. They believe it. Not all, but a majority.

NORTH KOREAN NEWSCASTER: [*subtitles*] Long-range artillery units are aimed to strike imperialist aggressor troops on the USA mainland

NARRATOR: In Pyongyang, state TV news is broadcast on public squares, warning of imminent war with America.

WOMEN IN MEETING: [*singing, subtitles*] Cheers resound all over the land hailing our dear General. He's the leader of the people

NARRATOR: Once a week whole villages are required to attend meetings glorifying the leader.

WOMEN IN MEETING: [*singing, subtitles*] Carrying forward the sun's cause. Long live, long live.

VILLAGER: [*subtitles*] Agh! What are they doing? Can't they hurry up? I'm starving. They're practicing to death. Oh, gosh.

NARRATOR: The regime demands displays of total loyalty. If you don't attend these weekly meetings you could come under suspicion.

SUE MI TERRY, Senior Analyst, CIA, 2001-08: The way North Korean regime keeps the regime going, one of the reasons is fear tactics.

NARRATOR: In North Korea, it's not only the person who commits the crime that is punished. Often their whole family will be arrested for guilt by association.

SUE MI TERRY: It's up to three generations. When the senior most North Korean defector, Hwang Jang Yop, defected, his relatives were rounded up in North Korea and were sent to prison camp. These guys didn't even know they were related to Hwang Jang Yop when the security guys came knocking on their door. They said, "I'm related to Hwang?" It was, like, a ninth cousin. This is how North Korea operates.

NARRATOR: Recent satellite imagery analyzed by Amnesty International shows that since Kim Jong Un came to power, the political prison camps have grown.

SUE MI TERRY: 200,000 civilians that are outside of the criminal penal system. And one of the camps, Hwasong, is 540 square kilometers. It's three times the size of Washington, D.C.

NARRATOR: It's estimated that as many as one in a hundred North Koreans is a political prisoner, many of whom were caught trying to defect.

Still, several thousand North Koreans try to escape through China each year. Lee, the former street kid, fled when he was 18.

"LEE": [*through interpreter*] I was very scared, but I thought it's better to die than live like an insect. Before I left, I prepared a little bit of food. I roasted some beans. I ate little bits of that as I went on my way. I went to the top of the mountains to see where the guards were positioned. Then at night, I crossed the river when nobody was watching.

I crossed the river alone and made it into China. I used the sun to get my directions and went inland.

NARRATOR: Defectors like Lee risk getting caught and sent back by China, North Korea's closest ally. But Lee says he met a broker who smuggled him 2,000 miles to the South Korean embassy in Thailand. He was granted asylum and flew to Seoul, where he has lived for the last two years. He still hides his identity because he's afraid of North Korean agents discovering him.

"LEE": [*through interpreter*] I graduated from high school in February this year. I'm currently looking for a job, but I'm not working yet. Although I live in South Korea now, it still troubles me to think about the North Korean children who suffer out there like I used to.

JIRO ISHIMARU, Editor, Asia Press: [*through interpreter*] North Korea is a society that has fallen ill. It's a diseased society that needs to be cured. Our footage is forcing North Korea to acknowledge the hardships that their people face. The authorities don't like it at all because if the truth gets out, it would put Kim Jong Un's power under threat.

NARRATOR: Jiro Ishimaru smuggles footage out of the country, but there is also a steady flow of information back in. Jeong Kwang-il is a defector living in Seoul who smuggles foreign films and TV shows into North Korea.

JEONG KWANG-IL: [*through interpreter*] The men prefer watching action films. Men love their action films. I sent them Skyfall recently. The women enjoy watching soap operas and dramas. They like that kind of film. Now they're sharing thumb drives a lot. Even officials have one or two. North Korea is trying to hunt them down because the thing that changes people's mindsets is popular culture. It probably has the most important role in bringing about democracy in North Korea.

NARRATOR: Jeong and his partner, also a defector, are on their way to the Chinese border to smuggle in laptops, radios, thumb drives and DVDs.

JEONG KWANG-IL: [*through interpreter*] Of course there's a risk. But I want to send them in, so I just do it? In North Korea, rumor has it there are 100 people that are desperate to get their hands on me. But they don't know when I go, do they?

NARRATOR: They are filming their trip with a hidden camera.

JEONG KWANG-IL: [*subtitles*] Hey, hey, hey. Your driving frightens me!

NARRATOR: Posing as mushroom importers, they bribed a border guard to let them across.

JEONG KWANG-IL: [*subtitles*] Go a bit slowly from here on. Go, go, go, just go.

DRIVER: [*subtitles*] I can't.

NARRATOR: The border guard isn't where he said he'd be, so they call him.

[*subtitles*]

[*on the phone*] Mr. [*deleted*]! Where are you right now? Huh? OK, I couldn't find you anywhere. I'll go up to you now. Are you at [*deleted*]? OK, 'bye.

They've blocked off the Tumen River.

With barbed wire.

Shall we try to go up to the guard post?

Yes.

Stop, stop, stop. We can park here. Stop for a second. You can't just cross the border by car.

Don't worry.

Can you zoom in? Can you zoom in? The bastards at the checkpoint are looking out.

They're looking out?

Yeah. They can see us, can't they?

Those bastards.

NARRATOR: The guard says he can't get them across, so they decide to wait until night.

Before defecting, Jeong used to cross the border illegally as a smuggler until he was caught and accused of being a spy. He was taken to a notorious political prison camp, Yodok.

JEONG KWANG-IL: [*through interpreter*] When I arrived at the prison camp, it was April 6th, 2000. It was awful when I went inside. That day, they completely beat the hell out of me. They'd put a wooden stick behind your knees and make you sit down, like this. If they pushed down on you, you'd collapse, and then you'd hear your kneecaps cracking.

I got beaten up and tortured for about nine months. Before I got arrested I weighed 165 pounds. After 10 months, I had a physical. When I looked at what I weighed, I was 79 pounds. I couldn't endure it anymore.

NARRATOR: After three years in Yodok, he says, the authorities determined he wasn't a spy and let him out. A year later, he defected and has been working against the regime ever since. Tonight, he's going back to the border.

[*subtitles*]

Further?

Here should be good. Here by the barbed wire.

That's the river. That's the Tumen River.

NARRATOR: Jeong waits on the Chinese side of the Tumen River for his North Korean smuggler. They find each other by sparking their cigarette lighters.

[*subtitles*]

JEONG KWANG-IL: I'm over here. Good job. Take these in. These are radios. You charge them up like this. Where are the thumb drives? These are the thumb drives, here. These will sell well, right?

CHINA PARTNER: Yes, of course. They're the same as last time, right?

JEONG KWANG-IL: Yes, the same as last time. Loads of recent films and TV shows saved on there. OK, thanks for doing this. When are you going to come again?

CHINA PARTNER: I'll call you.

JEONG KWANG-IL: OK. Good-bye! Be careful! The water's deep, so it might get wet. It'll get wet. Be careful. 'Bye!

NARRATOR: The DVDs and thumb drives make their way to markets across the country that are filled with goods illegally smuggled from China.

[*subtitles*]

REPORTER: How much for a DVD?

CHILD: Thirty cents for one DVD. But it's only 70 cents for all five.

REPORTER: What's on them?

CHILD: I don't know the titles.

NARRATOR: Within days, Jeong's smuggler delivers some of his thumb drives and DVDs to two teenage girls and films them watching.

GIRLS: [*subtitles*] What are they doing? Oh my, the cars.

Those are South Korean people. I think the South Koreans went on a trip to the Soviet Union or Europe.

Aren't those Soviets or European people?

These are South Korean people. I wish we could live somewhere like that. Isn't it cool?

Who's that? Is that your father?

NARRATOR: It's been reported that almost half of the North Koreans who defect had watched foreign television, even though it's illegal.

DAVID KANG, Dir., Korean Studies Inst., USC: Information and knowledge of the outside world is beginning to widen out. There's far more inner penetration of North Korean society today than before. If North Korean people themselves stop believing in the regime and the story they tell themselves, that means central control is breaking down in some ways.

NARRATOR: Kim Jong Un has reportedly been sending his security forces house to house, searching for illegal DVDs, and last November ordered the execution of as many as 80 people, some for watching foreign television.

WOMAN LISTENING TO THE RADIO: [*subtitles*] Look, it's Chinese broadcasts. There are South Korean broadcasts, too.

RADIO BROADCAST: [*subtitles*] We revealed yesterday the rumor that Kim Jong Un's wife filmed a porn video, and the North Korean government is tracking down the perpetrators of this rumor.

NARRATOR: Open Radio for North Korea is a station staffed by defectors transmitting stories into the country from across the border in the South.

KANG SIN SAM, Open Radio for North Korea: [*through interpreter*] What the North Korean regime fears the most is information about the outside world going into the country. We tell the North Korean people how vicious their dictatorship is. If someone listens to these broadcasts and passes the story on to other people, and if the story is political, it becomes a very serious matter. In these cases, I understand that some even face public execution.

NARRATOR: The story they are broadcasting today, that Kim Jong Un's wife, a former pop star, recorded a pornographic video, is quickly spreading around North Korea and has provoked a vicious reaction from the regime. The station reports that the singer of the popular song "Horse Lady" and other performers in this video have been executed for starting the rumor.

KANG SIN SAM: [*through interpreter*] Because North Koreans are so cut off, they're incredibly curious. And we've found that people take the risk of listening to these broadcasts.

NARRATOR: Surveys of defectors suggest that more than a million North Koreans listen to illegal foreign radio.

CHANYANG: [*through interpreter*] The more I listened to the radio, the more I thought what we've learned isn't true. I've been fooled, and this made me want to become free.

NARRATOR: Chanyang is 22. She lives in Seoul but grew up in a remote region of North Korea.

CHANYANG: [*subtitles*] Daddy, where are you?

NARRATOR: Her father bought the family a radio, which he modified to pick up foreign stations.

CHANYANG: [*through interpreter*] My father was preparing to come here ever since I was 9 years old. Living constantly in fear like that was really difficult. If we got caught, the whole family would get taken away. I was exhausted by it all, so I asked my father, "Even if it's North Korea, can't we just live safely?" But he said, "No. I want your generation to learn freely."

NARRATOR: When Chanyang was 17, her family decided to defect. To avoid raising suspicion, they left at different times. She was the last to leave.

CHANYANG: [*through interpreter*] I was always being watched. The people watching weren't just from the government. The people who were watching me were my friends and neighbors. I knew all of this but had to act as if I didn't.

NARRATOR: After two years laying low, Chanyang escaped through China and reunited with her family in Seoul.

CHANYANG: [*through interpreter*] My brother and sister had grown up so much when I saw them, and their accents had all changed, too. But we were all back together again in a circle. We're a family of five. We were all just so happy that we didn't even need to say a word. The first thing we did was just eat together.

NARRATOR: Chanyang now appears on a weekly TV show with other defectors called On My Way to Meet You.

CHANYANG: [*in English*] Here is my name and where I'm born.

NARRATOR: It's broadcast in South Korea, but is a popular show smuggled back into the North.

CHANYANG: [*through interpreter*] My friends back home watch it, and all the children of the party officials in North Korea watch it and say they will defect. We're going to talk about that today. When my friends see me on the show, they'll fantasize about South Korea. They'll see I've changed a lot. In North Korea, I never smiled.

NARRATOR: The show is part current affairs, part talent show, part beauty pageant.

SOKEEL PARK, Liberty in North Korea: North Korean defectors have emerged as very quiet agents of social progress in North Korea because people often assume that they just leave North Korea, and that's it. And at this point, where you have over 20,000 North Korean refugees that have resettled in South Korea, that's a significant population that are joining forces to reconnect with their families back inside. And when they see that one of them can leave that community, go to South Korea, that's a huge wake-up for them that shows just how more advanced and how much more open South Korea is.

NARRATOR: Jeong is back in Seoul, meeting with a group of defectors who are plotting against the North Korean regime.

JEONG KWANG-IL: [*subtitles*] It's so tiring climbing up these stairs. I feel like I'm dying. I need to take off my shoes, right?

YONG HEE: [*subtitles*] You wear the slippers.

NARRATOR: Yong Hee and her husband, Jeong-oh, have found another way to penetrate Kim Jong Un's secret state.

[*subtitles*]

PARK JEONG-OH: We decided just to send over dollars in balloons.

YONG HEE: It's a universal currency. Even in North Korea, you can exchange dollars.

PARK JEONG-OH: One dollar can buy around nine pounds of corn.

YONG HEE: That's about two days worth of food for a family. It's like winning the lottery in North Korea.

NARRATOR: Like Jeong, Yong Hee says she suffered at the hands of the North Korean regime. Her brother was caught trying to defect, and she was punished. She says she was locked up and tortured by security agents.

YONG HEE: [*subtitles*] They beat me for almost six days. They hit me a lot on my head and legs. If you press here, it's like a baby's head when they're just born. The back of my head is soft like that now. They said, "Families like yours shouldn't be alive!"

NARRATOR: She says the officers tied her brother's hands to the back of a truck and dragged him along a dirt road as an example to others.

YONG HEE: [*subtitles*] His face had completely peeled off after being dragged by the truck. He had scabs and dried, crusty blood. The moment my mother and I saw him, we couldn't say a thing. We didn't know what to say. My brother couldn't say a single word and just sat there with his head lowered. That was the last time I saw my brother.

NARRATOR: Yong Hee escaped with her husband and son, leaving her brother and mother behind.

YONG HEE: [*subtitles, at balloon launch*] Kim Jong Un is the bad guy. The people have done nothing wrong. I really want the regime to change very quickly.

Detach the bottom. Take off the bottom. OK, tape up this part. Tape up this part.

They tell us they look up into the sky on these days and money falls down.

BALLOON GROUP: [*freeing balloons*] Free North Korea!

U.S. NEWSCASTER: Sharp new warning of all-out war. For the first time, the mysterious and secretive nation

U.S. NEWSCASTER: There is nothing imminent, but these threatening statements have everyone on edge.

U.S. NEWSCASTER: Are we on the brink of nuclear war?

NARRATOR: Last spring, North Korea became the first country since the Cold War to threaten the United States mainland with a nuclear attack.

SUE MI TERRY, Senior Analyst, CIA, 2001-08: When watching this, I thought, wow, even from North Korean standards, this is really over the top. They always do this cycle of provocation. It's just the intensity of the recent provocation was even greater.

VICTOR CHA, Nat'l Security Council, 2004-07: I don't think anybody believed that North Koreans were really going to launch a nuclear missile at the United States. But the basic question that rose, does this guy know where the red line is? Does he know when the bluster should stop, or is he really going to do something stupid? This fellow may not know what is real and what is a video game.

NARRATOR: Western intelligence agencies were concerned because they knew so little about the young leader.

SUE MI TERRY: It's really sad, but when Kim Jong Un first became known, the CIA had this one bad picture of 11-year-old boy, with that bratty grin, and that's what we were working with. That's the photo that we had. And what we knew about it was already in The New York Times. It wasn't really much more than that.

NARRATOR: Kim Jong Un was brought up by his mother, opera singer Ko Yong Hui, one of Kim Jong Il's four wives. He spent three years in a school in Switzerland, posing as the son of a diplomat. At

the age of 18, he was called back to Pyongyang, where he was secretly groomed to become leader.

[www.pbs.org: *Kim Jong Un's early years*]

State media had never shown Kim Jong Un or mentioned him by name until the year before his father's death in December 2011. He was then unveiled to the North Korean public in this state-produced documentary.

DOCUMENTARY: [*subtitles*] Our revolution, which has achieved victory over many decades continuing into the new century, has welcomed the new Supreme Leader.

NARRATOR: Kim Jong Un succeeded his father and grandfather to become the new leader of North Korea.

SUE MI TERRY: In North Korea, reverence for age, experience. These things matter. And now you are sort of parading around this 29-year old guy who did not serve a day in the military. I doubt that people genuinely have the kind of feeling towards Kim Jong Un as they did for Kim Jong Il.

CHANYANG: [*through interpreter*] We would say, "How can this boy who's still wet behind the ears be in power?" But the North Korean government spread these rumors that although he was young, he was very wise. That's what the government kept saying.

NARRATOR: Jiro's undercover footage shows people all over the country being forced to prove their dedication to the new leader, but some resenting having to do it. These soldiers were ordered to build a railroad from Kim Jong Un's birthplace to Pyongyang to mark him coming to power.

SOLDIER: [*subtitles*] The railroad has to be finished by February 16th to give as a present, but it's still not done. Nobody has any control

over building this railroad. The bastard managers just sit at their desks. We shouldn't have to do this in winter. We were given this sudden order.

NARRATOR: The undercover footage even shows a local official criticizing Kim Jong Un's succession.

OFFICIAL: [*subtitles*] He shouldn't be there. He can't do anything. He's too young, you know? No matter how hard he tries, even if it kills him, he's hopeless.

NARRATOR: To compensate for his lack of experience, the regime made parallels with his grandfather, Kim Il Sung, who is still widely worshipped and is officially Eternal President of North Korea.

SUE MI TERRY: You had all kinds of rumors Kim Jong Un even had cosmetic surgery to look like his grandfather. But certainly, his style seems to be more like Kim Il Sung, as well.

SOKEEL PARK, Liberty in North Korea: Trying to be a reincarnation of his grandfather is actually smart, in a way, because his grandfather is remembered by a lot of North Koreans as a much more benevolent leader than his father. It's PR style at the moment. According to the defectors that I've spoken with who've left the country fairly recently, the economy has not improved under Kim Jong Un.

NARRATOR: The problem for Kim Jong Un is that North Koreans' expectations are changing.

JIRO ISHIMARU, Editor, Asia Press: [*through interpreter*] Because more information is flowing in, it's getting very difficult to make people obey. There are very few people left who blindly obey every command that comes from on high.

NARRATOR: Behind closed doors, even members of the North Korean elite have voiced unhappiness with the regime, like this businesswoman filmed at a private lunch.

[*subtitles*]

1st MAN: All we're saying is give us some basic rights, right? We don't have any.

WOMAN: It's not like that in China. In China, they've got freedom of speech, you know. They went through the Cultural Revolution.

2ndWOMAN: We North Koreans are wise and very loyal. An uprising is still something we don't understand.

1st MAN: But even that's only to a certain point.

WOMAN: There can't be a rebellion. They'll kill everyone ruthlessly. Yes, ruthlessly. The problem here is that one in three people will secretly report you. That's the problem. That's how they do it.

2ndMAN: Let's just drink up. There's no use talking about it.

NARRATOR: The cynicism about their leaders comes partly from radical change in the way people make a living.

JIRO ISHIMARU: [*through interpreter*] Looking at footage shot inside North Korea, we can see that a huge number of people have started doing business with each other. This used to be illegal, and anyone caught buying or selling for personal gain was severely punished.

NARRATOR: Illegal markets first began to appear when the state stopped being able to feed its people during the famine. Today the state tolerates them, but people are pushing the limits of private enterprise. This woman is running an illegal private bus service. An army officer tries to stop her from picking up passengers.

WOMAN: [*subtitles*] If you're an officer, where are your stars then? Let me see them then. Let me see your stars then. Where are your stars if

you're an officer? Let me see your stars. Where are your stars if you're an officer?

OFFICER: Hey! Hey! Hey!

WOMAN: Hey! Hey! Hey! You bastard! You're an ass-*[deleted]*!

JIRO ISHIMARU: *[through interpreter]* People's willingness to confront or ignore authority has become more and more common. People around the world have this image of North Koreans as being brainwashed, but that's very mistaken. Often now, when North Koreans are challenged for infringing a certain law, as long as the offense is not political, they don't hesitate to protest if they believe the law to be irrational.

NARRATOR: Until recently, it was illegal for women to wear pants. Soldiers are arguing with this woman about breaking the dress code.

WOMAN IN PANTS: *[subtitles]* Don't hit me! Why are you hitting me?

OFFICER: *[subtitles]* Stop it, bitch!

WOMAN IN PANTS: *[subtitles]* Watch your mouth. Don't call me a bitch!

NARRATOR: The soldiers put an armband on her to mark her offense.

WOMAN IN PANTS: *[subtitles]* Those people are wearing trousers.

NARRATOR: But before long, she rips it off, and a senior officer steps in.

[subtitles]

SENIOR OFFICER: You're not going to be quiet?

FEMALE OFFICER: You're saying you don't deserve this? Watch your mouth! Don't call me a bitch.

SENIOR OFFICER: Please stop it.

WOMAN IN PANTS: Why aren't you telling off those people wearing trousers? I'm so annoyed.

NARRATOR: Five years ago, cell phones arrived in North Korea. The undercover footage shows dozens of people lining up to buy SIM cards. The phones can only make calls inside North Korea, but they can be modified to call outside the country, a very serious crime.

VICTOR CHA, Nat'l Security Council, 2004-07: There is an awareness and ability for the population to communicate instantaneously that was never there before. North Korea went from zero to 1 million cell phone registrations in three years. But to get from 1 million to 2 million, it only took one year. And probably, to get from 2 million to 3 million will only take 6 months. That concrete wall that has been there for 60 years or so will become more porous.

SOKEEL PARK: These changes cannot be stopped. Marketization, information flows, all of these kind of trends lead to a transformation one way or another of North Korea. The system as it stands is just unsustainable.

[www.pbs.org: *More on the challenges to the regime*]

VICTOR CHA: Kim Jong Un faces the dictator's dilemma, which is they need to open up to survive, but the process of opening up could lead to the collapse of the regime— not the state but of the regime. And so this is a dilemma that he faces, it's one his father faced, it's one his grandfather faced.

NARRATOR: This dilemma has led to a power struggle at the very top of the government, according to the regime's former propagandist.

JAN JIN-SUNG, Former Propagandist: [*through interpreter*] In the past, there weren't hardliners and reformers, there was only party loyalty. Today, however, rival factions have formed. The fact a split exists shows he hasn't got a stable leadership, like his father. So the

only way for Kim Jong Un to hold onto power is through a reign of terror.

NARRATOR: Kim Jong Un came to power surrounded by his father's generals. Since then, he has purged almost half of the top military. In December 2013, his uncle, Jang Song Thaek, an advocate for reform who'd served at the top of the government for 30 years, was forcibly removed from a party meeting. A week later, he was executed.

ANDREI LANKOV, Author, The Real North Korea: If a government is willing to kill as many people as necessary to stay in power, it usually stays in power for a very long time. There are many people who are not happy. There are many people who, in the privacy of their bedrooms, sometimes say something very, very subversive to their wives and most trusted friends. But no networks and no activities yet because the government is brutal.

SUE MI TERRY: Even if, let's say, the public's more aware of the outside world, is that going to necessarily lead them to have a revolution? Several people cannot even get together to about it. With what's happening in the Middle East, there's Twitter, there's Facebook. There'sÄ people can get mobilized. They can get together. The way Korean system is set up right now, they don't have any kind of mechanism to do that.

VICTOR CHA: I think in the case of North Korea, there are credible pieces that you can put together and say there really is a potential here that something quote dramatic could happen. No one could predict the collapse of the Soviet Union, no one could predict the Arab Spring. Afterwards, everybody said it was obvious.

JIRO ISHIMARU: [*through interpreter*] It's not easy to predict when the regime will fall. However, the foundations of change in North Korea

are being laid. North Koreans have undergone a huge shift in their collective mindset. I think change will come.