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WEEKLY SURVEY
19 NOVEMBER 1948

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KOREA: FAMILIAR PARALLELISMS

Korea

Broadcasters in Moscow and Pyongyang make no effort to vary their familiar story this week. They contend that the U.S. and its puppet Syngman Rhee are avaricious, anti-popular, and aggressive while the USSR and the People's Democratic Government of Kim Il Sung are beneficent, for the people, and peace-loving. The familiar claims are tied to current developments in that the South Cholla "rebellion," the grain purchase law, and the constitution are said to reveal the anti-popular and aggressive nature of Rhee and the Americans. Withdrawal of Soviet troops, the prosperity of northern Koreans, and the convention of the North Korea Democratic League are held to demonstrate the positive qualities of the USSR and the northern regime.

No reference is made to pending General Assembly consideration of the Korean issue nor to reported Soviet preparations for that consideration.

a. "The So-Called National Army Riot": Pyongyang reports with some relish uprisings in the American zone. In addition to giving details of the people's "offensives" it maximizes the claim that the insurrections reflect growing popular dissatisfaction with the Americans and their "puppet" government. The second aspect with which Pyongyang is concerned is the "confusion" said to be resulting in Rhee's mind from the uprisings. The Rhee Government is said to be resorting to more and more brutal measures to quell the disturbances--still another black mark against it.

Radio Moscow reports that disturbances are taking place and quotes Radio Pyongyang as its source of intelligence. It also notes, in broadcasts to Asiatic audiences, that the U.S. plans to increase the numbers of police and gendarmes in Korea, as conclusive evidence of America's aggressive spirit.

b. North Korean Democratic Youth League Convention: The third session of the League, which opened 12 November in Pyongyang, was marked by familiar characteristics. It was attended by delegates from the USSR, China, and the southern zone. And it sent and received telegrams of congratulations to and from the appropriate individuals and groups, including Stalin, Kim Il Sung, and youth groups in Korea, the Soviet Union, Finland, etc.

c. Korea Is "Grateful" to the USSR: Radio Pyongyang misses no opportunity to demonstrate northern Korean "gratitude" to the USSR for its purportedly altruistic restoration of the economy, government, and social structure of the zone. This week Pyongyang notes the thousands of thank-you messages sent Generalissimo Stalin by Koreans in both zones who are grateful for Soviet aid and for the withdrawal of troops. The "movement" for sending these messages is said to be persevering south of the 38th parallel despite "persecution by the reactionary police."

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"We must thank the Soviet Union" says one broadcast, which extols the Soviet contribution to northern Korea's cultural and scientific progress. (Pyongyang, 16 November 1948). The speaker, propaganda chief of the Korean-Soviet Cultural Society, claims that the USSR introduced Korea to its progressive, working-class culture and that this culture teaches the people to foster good will and mutual happiness.

Farmers of the northern zone are reminded of their debt of gratitude to the Soviet Union in an 8 November address by Kim Yong T'aek, chief of the North Korea Farmers League. The broadcast reiterates that "a great transformation has taken place... owing to the Soviet Army's (determination) and activities" and calls upon farmers to show their appreciation by accomplishing certain "tasks" before winter sets in. Farmers are reminded of the "seriousness" of fall plowing and of tax payments and of the necessity of cooperating with officials in arranging transportation and wrapping of grain paid in as taxes in kind. They are also called upon to "simultaneously pay taxes in kind for cotton... tobacco, fruits and sea foods" and to mobilize all human as well as animal labor.