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FAR EAST

5. Re-election of Rhee as ROK President reported "assured":
Syngman Rhee cannot be defeated in the coming election for
president conducted by the ROK National Assembly [redacted]

His victory is assured [redacted] because Rhee is appointing Assemblymen's relatives to government posts and the Ministry of Internal Affairs is giving each Assemblyman a monthly subsidy of 500,000 won. Reportedly the ROK Army will be used to ensure Rhee's victory if it becomes necessary. [redacted]

Comment: President Rhee's election to another term of office is considered highly possible by American officials in Korea. The principal reason for these opinions, however, is the inability of the National Assembly to agree on an alternate candidate.

The dominant factor in the coming election will be the temper at the time of the National Assembly; currently it is strongly anti-Rhee. The possibility remains that if Rhee continues his campaign of intimidation and subversion, an enraged National Assembly will bring his defeat.

6. Communist offensive in east central Korea again pre-
dicted: [redacted] "a Chinese
 Communist-North Korean offensive" is to be launched on the
 east central front in "a matter of weeks."

In connection with this data, [redacted] the 20th Chinese Communist Army had moved into the Hamhung-Kowon area between 20 and 24 March, displacing the V North Korean Corps which had proceeded southwest of Wonsan. Heavy troop movements have recently been observed south and west of Wonsan. [redacted]

Comment: A very recent report from this same general area similarly predicted an offensive in the near future, although different Chinese Communist units were named.

There are no indications that the Communists intend to launch a general offensive along the entire front in the near

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future. Various reports and troop movements during recent weeks, however, raise the definite possibility that Communist forces in eastern Korea are contemplating a limited objective offensive of considerable weight.

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