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SPECIAL REPORT
27 FEBRUARY 1948

- G 1 -

Korea

KOREA: AMERICAN "GUILT" REITERATED

General Hodge, as the symbol of United States Military Government in Korea and hence, for Moscow broadcasters, of "oppression," is attacked directly and indirectly in a series of broadcasts this week. The implicit contrast between conditions in the "oppressed" American and those in the Soviet zone is made explicit in one Danilov commentary which extols the activities of the People's Committee. This comparatively rare reference to specific developments in the Soviet zone does not, however, mention the draft constitution or the People's Army. Moscow rounds out the picture with denunciation of the U.N. Commission for its alleged attempt to set up a "puppet" state in Korea, of the U.S. for its claimed failure to carry out the Moscow decision, and of Syngman Rhee, Kim Koo, and other "traitors" for their self-seeking collaboration with Americans.

Current Little Assembly deliberations on the Korean election issue are not noted although there are frequent references in Moscow and Pyongyang commentaries to the issue itself.

Pyeongyang, as usual, is wholeheartedly and enthusiastically concerned with domestic developments, particularly the draft constitution. Public reaction to and comment on the constitution is reported and the theories behind Soviet, American, and south Korean constitutions are contrasted.

a. General Hodge "Lies": The most direct attack on Hodge is found in an article by Y. Davydov which "exposes" General Hodge's alleged falsifications with reference to the alleged incarceration of persons guilty of nothing more than opposition to American methods. (Irkutsk, in English Morse to Shanghai for the Soviet Embassy in Nanking, 23 February 1948) Quoting statistics to "prove" that more persons are now in jail for political reasons than under the Japanese regime, Davydov questions the "concocted documents" issued by American headquarters in answer to questions by members of the U.N. Commission pertaining to such arrests. He quotes, as further proof of his charge of curtailment of civil liberties in the American zone, statements by correspondents of the NEW YORK POST and of REUTERS who describe the "police state" conditions existing in the southern zone. Familiar reports of arrests made in previous months are coupled with reports of the arrest of "over one thousand" participants in the Seoul disturbances of a fortnight ago. Furthermore, says Moscow, "about 50 persons were killed and several dozen wounded" in the recent strikes. These "facts" prove the worthlessness of Hodge's "lying assertions" of civil rights, says Davydov.

Danilov merely rephrases these same charges in a commentary broadcast on 25 February in Korean. Hodge's recent statement concerning the Seoul disturbances is said to "reveal" the General to be "something like a colonist who hates the Korean people." Hodge's statement is further characterized as "slander" against Korean patriots, and his allegation that the disturbances were incited by

~~RESTRICTED~~

~~RESTRICTED~~

SPECIAL REPORT
27 FEBRUARY 1948

- G 2 -

northern Koreans is discounted by the counter charge that America plans a "puppet state" south of the 38th parallel.

Danilov quotes the same press statements quoted by Davydov in another discussion of "conditions in South Korea," broadcast in Korean on 17 and 20 February 1948. Danilov resorts to the unusual technique of simply repeating sentences that emphasize his charges. For example, he repeats quotations from the NEW YORK POST report of "groans" that can be heard in the vicinity of southern prisons. These charges of American cruelty are, however, secondary to Danilov's primary contention that U.S. and Korean reactionaries are plotting to establish a "reactionary" regime in South Korea which will seek to "enslave" North Korea. To emphasize this point, he again repeats himself. The following sentence is said twice: "American military authorities were not content to dispose of the individual leaders but went further to support in every way possible the activities of Korean reactionary elements who have grown fat on the sweat and blood of the Korean people and who are selling Korea to American monopolies in order to preserve their property."

These Moscow charges of American oppression of Koreans along political and social lines are supplemented by equally familiar Pyongyang charges of economic oppression. Statistics of prices and wages are quoted to show that the increase in the former has far exceeded the increase in the latter, with consequent ill effects for southern Koreans. In addition, Pyongyang alleges that the American authorities import "non-essential" commodities while necessary items are ignored. The profits which Americans have allegedly made from the occupation are recounted in this connection, as well as the complaints of city officials of Inchoo who are reported to have asked for an increase in wages and rations because of difficult living conditions.

b. Syngman Rhee's "Mental Aberrations": Familiar but often more or less indirect references to Kim Koo, Kim Kiu Sic, Syngman Rhee, and Kim Sung Soo are made more pointed in a 17 February broadcast in Mandarin. After denouncing the U.N. Commission in stereotyped fashion, the commentary turns to the "criss-cross" activities of the four leaders, with particular emphasis on the "mental aberrations" of Syngman Rhee. He is said to be a "traitor" who is a "pest of the democratic thought of the Korean people whom he fears most" and is said to be "madly pressing his American friends to build him a government in South Korea." His great "flurry" of activity is attributed to fear of the growing democracy of North Korea which is exercising a "terrible influence" on the people of the American zone. Rhee's plan to establish a government in South Korea with an army equipped with "Japanese weapons supplied by the Americans" is said to indicate his close similarity to "bandit fascists of the Greek monarchy." In conclusion the group of four men is described as a "group of dogs (who) have turned out to be crazy and distracted."

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~~RESTRICTED~~

SPECIAL REPORT
27 FEBRUARY 1948

- G 3 -

c. Moscow Decision vs. U.N. Commission: Radio Moscow's familiar thesis, in which the Soviet program in northern Korea is shown to be in full compliance with the Moscow decision on Korea, is the basis of a Danilov commentary (in Korean, 22 February). The broadcast discusses the People's Committee with respect to its founding and its activities and underscores the progress which has been achieved in the Russian Zone. The Committee, successor to committees formed at the time of the liberation, is said to have fared better than its southern counterpart for "in South Korea the people's committees were dissolved upon the arrival of the Americans and it was only in North Korea that the people's committees continued to function." Danilov goes on to offer proof of his claim that "the liberated people hold their own rights in their own hands." And in evidence of Korean appreciation of the part played by the Russian Army in this saga of development he quotes the letter sent by northern Koreans to Stalin on the 30th anniversary of the Red Army:

"Even if mountains collapse and the blue seas dry up after centuries, the Korean people will never forget this (anniversary) day. We have come through a dark age. We owe our happiness to the Red Army."

This same thesis--with its corollary of U.S. failure to observe the terms of the declaration, climaxed by the U.N. Commission--is the basis of an appeal issued by the People's Coalition Front of North Korea. Drafted at a meeting on 20 February, and broadcast by Pyongyang twice on that same day, the appeal is also broadcast by Moscow, in Korean, on 22 February. Further, a PRAVDA report of the appeal is broadcast, again in Korean, on 23 and 24 February 1948. The appeal devotes appreciable wordage to a summation of previously reiterated charges of American domination of southern Koreans and of American failure to further Korean progress. Dealing in emotional terms with the U.N. Commission and the Soviet proposal for withdrawal of troops--which symbolize American "guilt" and Soviet "morality"--the appeal warns Koreans of the "inimical machinations" of Americans who seek to divide the two zones. Furthermore, it asks Koreans to "demand" the holding of national elections "after the withdrawal of foreign troops" since elections held under present conditions of "unprecedented terrorism" south of the 38th parallel would be "cheating."

d. The Draft Constitution: Pyongyang's campaign to laud the draft constitution in both theory and practice is furthered in a variety of broadcasts. The theory behind the document is examined in two broadcasts. One criticizes the separation-of-power theory as exemplified in the American constitution and others patterned on it--a theory not found in the constitution drafted in North Korea. The second praises the socialist theory of the Soviet Constitution in contrast to more "bourgeois constitutions" which merely "enslave the people." Other broadcasts in this same campaign report discussion meetings and suggestions for changes in the draft, all of which are presumed to indicate popular support for the constitution. The suggested changes are by and large concerned with phraseology only.

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