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WEEKLY SURVEY
18 JUNE 1948

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Korea

KOREA: THE RADIOS MARK TIME

Both Moscow and Pyongyang radios appear to be marking time in commenting on developments in Korea. Monitored commentaries from Moscow this week include a familiar denunciation of the "gun-point" elections on 10 May, an equally familiar denunciation by Danilov of the U.S. for its refusal to withdraw troops, and prosaic comments on North Korea by a Soviet musician who visited Pyongyang, Wonsan, and Chorwon. Moscow and TASS report the Seoul press announcement that three members of the erstwhile Japanese administrative staff returned to Seoul on 8 June "on a secret mission"; since such reports fit readily into one phase of the Soviet attack on American occupation policies, i.e., the U.S. relies on the Japanese who are "hated" by the Koreans, the "secret mission" may be maximized in subsequent broadcasts.

The Soviet-controlled transmitter at Pyongyang departs from its characteristic preoccupation with domestic affairs. This may be an indication that it, too, is waiting for something or someone, either in Washington, Seoul, or Moscow to resolve the stalemate in the power issue and the formation of a Korean Government. Deliberations of the National Assembly in Seoul are followed with an air of derisive, but jaundiced, interest.

a. Radio Pyongyang Looks at the World: Radio Pyongyang's characteristic provincialism insofar as commentaries are concerned appears to be lessening. Broadcasts monitored in the past week discuss such events as the Rome session of the WFTU and Ernest Bevin's speech at the Scarborough session of the Labor Party. Week in and week out, until very recently, Pyongyang's "Commentary Committee" has prepared talks only on subjects bearing directly on the Korean situation. News dispatches, however, utilized TASS reports of developments in other parts of the globe and continue to do so.

Commentaries monitored in the past week have fallen into two broad categories, those criticizing the United States and Britain and those praising the USSR. Thus a commentary reporting Chinese students' dissatisfaction with American policies in Japan falls obviously into the first-named category while a talk entitled "The Soviet Army Is a Bulwark of Peace and Security of the World and the Symbol of Freedom and Emancipation" falls as obviously into the second. In the first-named category, also, is a 14 June commentary describing America's "imperialistic... trampling down" of the rights of such "small nations" as Greece, Indonesia, China, Palestine, and France. The charges range from the use of poison gas in Indonesia to the usurping of the French market for automobiles. A series of broadcasts describing "the new democracies" falls into the second category; it opened on 14 June with a talk on Yugoslavia.

The discussion of Chinese students' attitudes is attributed to TASS and NKP (North Korean Press) but briefer discussions of the U.S. elections, the pending economic crisis in America (which is said to result from over-production), the criticism of Bevin, and the report of the WFTU meeting have contained no such acknowledgement and may be presumed to have been prepared by Pyongyang staff members--on the basis of TASS and/or NKP dispatches, however.

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Comment on Korean affairs follows the familiar pattern of underscoring in vitriolic, emotional terms alleged American malfeasance in the occupation of South Korea. Broadcasts reiterate the claim that "General Hodge forced the 10 May elections at gun point" and that the National Assembly, formed subsequent to the election, is a "country-ruining" organization composed of "freaks." The adjective "country-ruining" is applied in description of almost any American move, but is chiefly used to impugn the election and the Assembly; it is used with off-hand repetitiousness as if to build up a permanent association between "Americans" and the ruin of Korea.

The question of payment for electric power is offered as another example of American viciousness. Broadcasts allege that American imperialists have shown that they "have no intention of paying North Korea"; they review the history of the conflict repeatedly and progressively revise downward the portion of the bill already paid. Pyongyang originally acknowledged that the Seoul administration had paid 23 percent of the account; the latest version is but 15 percent.

Americans, and Korean "traitors," are profiteering from the power situation, the Soviet-controlled transmitter reiterates. Furthermore, General Hodge, and other "daylight bandits" are said to be blowing a sinister bugle" to disguise their "plottings" and to cast blame on the Soviet zone. In addition, Americans and pro-American Koreans are accused of extravagant use of electric power while other Koreans are forced to live in darkness:

"Hodge and a handful of traitors are enjoying an ample supply of electric power. In spite of the exorbitant charges they have to pay, the masses of South Korean people cannot use electric lights except in the small hours of the morning. Therefore, after sunset it is a dark world in South Korea. Causing such inconvenience to the people, American imperialists and their hirelings, the pro-Japanese and national traitors, are burning bright electric lights, indulging in nightly orgies of dance and drink. Yet Hodge and his hirelings, the pro-Japanese and traitors, who consider it their vocation to murder and rob, are not in the least willing to pay the electric bill."

Other evidences of U.S. perfidy rounded up by Pyongyang include the charge that South Korea is being "flooded" with American medicines which are sold at tremendous profit and that "American imperialists" are demonstrating their historical experience at massacre in the southern zone. This consistent reliance on murder and bloodshed is said to have transmitted itself to Korean officials who, "flurried" by Korean opposition, "have gone insane."

Pyongyang's ordinarily primary concern, the underscoring of the contrast in alleged conditions in the American and Soviet zones, receives somewhat less attention than has been customary. It is evident, however, in reports of the arrival in North Korea of two cutters from the South Korean fleet, in reports of the poverty of South Korean farmers, and in reports of the distribution of a movie just concluded in Pyongyang depicting the "brilliant democratic achievements" of North Korea.