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- J 2 -

WEEKLY SURVEY
3 DECEMBER 1948

Korea

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KOREA: NATIONAL ASSEMBLY COMMITS AN "OUTRAGE"

The Seoul National Assembly's resolution requesting retention of American troops in Korea occasions a torrent of comment from Moscow and Pyongyang. This has, in fact, been the major topic of Soviet and North Korean broadcasters since the resolution was adopted on 20 November. Pyongyang's disgust reaches such a pitch that its outpourings surpass even that voluble transmitter's past record. Preoccupation with the Assembly resolution is so complete that references to such other topics as the alleged "rebellion" in the American zone and the stereotyped charges of deliberate U.S. mismanagement of the Korean economy are merely sandwiched in.

a. The Resolution is "Country-ruining," "Sinister," "Traitorous":
No denunciatory adjective is overlooked by Pyongyang broadcasters in their campaign to revile the Assembly, Syngman Rhee, and the Americans.

Moscow radio echoes this violent attack but in a less emotional fashion. Danilov, Krainov and Alexandrov are credited with commentaries decrying the Assembly action; and Moscow and TASS quote Radio Pyongyang on this subject.

~~RESTRICTED~~

~~RESTRICTED~~

- 3 -

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Radio Pyongyang's condemnation of the Assembly resolution covers both cause and effect. It contends that the resolution reflects the "bankruptcy" of the Syngman Rhee Government which does not represent Korean opinion and was improperly elected. Citing the "numbers" of Assemblymen who refused to participate in deliberations on the resolution, Pyongyang argues that this proves that "the people" really desire the withdrawal of all troops. Furthermore, the resolution is said to reveal the sinister, imperialistic plans of Rhee and of the United States.

The Soviet commentator Krainov, in a Korean-language commentary of 29 November, argues that the resolution of Rhee and of the United States, "makes it only too clear that the Americans are scheming to make Korea an American colonial possession ... in opposition to international pledges." This assertion is echoed and re-echoed by both Moscow and Pyongyang.

As conclusive evidence that the resolution is contrary to popular opinion, Pyongyang reports "protest meetings" and critical comment--the latter originating in such varied groups as school teachers, labor unions, Christians, streetcar operators, miners, women's clubs, writers and artists, farmers, and fishermen. These criticisms and protests are occasionally summarized in Moscow and TASS transmissions.

b. Korea and the United Nations: Radio Moscow discusses U.N. consideration of the Korean issue in the familiar framework of western "imperialistic" efforts to nullify activities of "popular democracy."

Smirnov, in a commentary broadcast in Korean and Mandarin, compares east-west attitudes in terms of the Czech suggestion that northern Korean representatives be invited to the Paris session--a suggestion blocked by the American delegation.

Petrov, in a Korean-language commentary of 25 November, dwells upon the alleged illegality of the Little Assembly and of the Korean Commission; he argues that Syngman Rhee "is clutching at the Interim Committee as a drowning man clutches a straw." Davydov also underscores the "illegality" of the Korean Commission and scorns the Commission's report: "It is evident that the report was written by the United States Department of State." (in Korean, 1 December 1948) The commentary reviles members of the Commission who assertedly operate on the theory that "a lie if repeated many times will become truth."

~~RESTRICTED~~

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- J 4 -

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c. Terror and Oppression in the South: Pyongyang and Moscow display continued interest in the progress of the "people's rebellion" in southern Korea. Pyongyang, quoting SYEGYE ILBO, reports successive military and political victories, including the re-establishment of People's Committees "in some areas" and the display of the "flag of the People's Republic everywhere in South Korea." Pyongyang, and Radio Moscow quoting Pyongyang, also report the terrorist methods allegedly resorted to by the American-trained police in a futile effort to quell the rebellion.

"Despite the desperate terror struck by the reactionary police of the puppet Government, which is madly massacring the people, the South Korean people are steadily keeping up their struggle in concert with the revolting army, flying flags of the People's Republic and lighting bonfires as well as distributing handbills." (Pyongyang, 28 November 1948)

Radio Pyongyang takes pains to deny the Seoul claim that American forces took no part in putting down the disturbances. A 22 November broadcast quotes National Assembly debates to document the assertion that "it is a fact known all around that the American troops are interfering in the operations against the South Korean insurgents."

"Desperate" efforts of the South Korean Government to deceive its own people by reporting riots in the northern zone are refuted again this week. A 26 November Pyongyang broadcast accuses "the so-called Home Minister of the South Korean Government, Yun Chi Yong" of resorting to "the Nazi pattern of false propaganda" when he reported the "alleged riots." The Home Minister was later forced to recant, Pyongyang points out, and "thus exposed himself in broad daylight."

Danilov's 26 November Korean-language commentary typifies Moscow's observations on the situation in the south. The commentary derides Syngman Rhee's repeated announcements that the rebellion has been quelled and castigates his use of police terror." Danilov claims that Syngman Rhee has become so frightened that he is crying for American troops. American plans to retain troops in Korea are classed with America's "sinister ambitions" in Greece, China, and Japan.

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