

FAR EAST COMMAND  
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# INCOMING MESSAGE

*Secret*  
PRIORITY

9 Jan 49

FROM : CG USAFIK  
TO : DA (FOR INTELLIGENCE DIV, GEN STAFF, USA)  
INFO : AMA, CHINA, (G-2), CINCPC  
NR : ZGBI 38

WEEKA Nbr 54, period 1 Jan to 8 Jan 49.  
Current.

1. Lee Bum Suk is reported to have relinquished control of the Korean National Youth Corps to Shin Suk Woo, a personal friend of President Rhee, who was Sec of Finance in the Korean Prov Govt in China from 19 to 26. Caught by Japanese Police and ret to Korea in 26, Shin served a brief prison term and when released became editor of the Chouun Il Bo. He returned to China in 38 acting as an advisor to Chiang Kai Shek in intelligence matters. Returning to Korea in May 47 at the request of Rhee, Shin to the present has not taken an active part in governmental affairs, although he was considered for the post of Prime Minister and was offered the position of minister with our portfolio, which he declined. Shin is a brother-in-law of Lee Bum Suk.

Comment: It should be noted that the relinquishing of nominal control is not necessarily the release of real control.

2. There are persistent rumors that Prime Minister Lee Bum Suk will be replaced, probably around the middle of Jan. Furthermore, it has been reported that Shin Suk Woo has been offered the position, but has declined the appointment. Members of the National Assembly have indicated that the appointment of any 1 of the fol 3 would be acceptable: Shin Ik Ni, Kim Sung Soo, and Chi Tai Hyund (Lee Chung Chun). Another possible choice is Cho So Ang, who might gain confirmation in view of the 30-40 members of the National Assembly said to be affiliated with his new Socialist Party.

Comment: Lee and Rhee have been having difficulties for several weeks, chiefly over Lee's reluctance to relinquish control of his Korean National Youth Corps by merging it with an amalgamated gp, the Great Korean Youth Corps. Lee is rpted to have turned over control within the past few days (see above), but it is thought

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FROM : CG USAFIK NR : ZGBI 38 9 JAN 49 CONT'D

that Rhee has not forgotten nor forgiven. Nor is it logical to assume that any leader would be unaware of the fact that 1 of his ministers is extremely powerful politically and probably entertains the ambitions common to most Koreans. So far as Lee's successor is concerned any of those mentioned would be acceptable to Rhee and, in view of their conference it may be that a decision has been reached among them as to the man for the job.

3. As a result of the full recognition of the Republic of Korea by the US on 1 Jan 49, President Rhee issued a press release expressing the gratitude of the people of Korea. In this release he stated that this recognition is in fact a sequence to the officials statement issued by the Govt of the US on 12 Aug, 48, and of the resolution of 12 Dec, 48, adopted by the UN gen Assembly. The Korean people, having done their part as required by the UN, have earned the recognition. President Rhee further stated that the recognition thus tendered to his people recognized not only the formal status of the Korean Govt as an independent state but also the capability of the Korean people to govern themselves.

4. 2 ships of the 3000 ton class with Soviet markings were observed approx 5 miles off Sanyang-Ri (950-1150) Cheju-Do by the Korean Coast Guard at 031400 Jan. Coast Guard vessels gave chase, but high seas prevented interception.

Comment: Korean Security Forces held the opinion that the ships sighted were vessels with supplies from north Korea intended for raider forces on Cheju-Do. This opinion has been voiced previously by the same sources, but is unconfirmed.

5. Constabulary Intelligence in a delayed report (28 Dec 48) indicated receipt of info that Hong Myun Hi, vice premier of the North Korean Peoples Govt, fled to South Korea on 9 Dec 48, and is now in hiding. Hong was alleged to have taken a large nbr of documents pertaining to the Peoples gov't with him upon his departure. It is further alleged that the Peoples Gov't has issued a warrant for his arrest.

Comment: While no info is available to substantiate the report of Hong's defection from North Korea, the news represent a possible crack in Pyongyang solidarity. It is logical that he would go into hiding to avoid retribution at the hands of Korean authorities, but it is not inconceivable that the people's party documents may eventually be used as trading stock for his personal safety. The propaganda value of his defection, if proven, is obvious.

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PRIORITY

FROM : CG USAFIK NR : ZGBI 38 9 JAN 49 CONT'D

War potential.

1. The price of rice in Seoul averaged 750 won per small mal on 6 Jan.

Comment: The small metric mal (18.48 lbs) was adopted by Skig as a unit of measurement and was used temporarily by merchants in Seoul. Recently merchants reverted to the old custom of using the small mal (16.5 lbs).

2. Monetary exchange rates on the same date were 1050 won for 1 US silver certificate and 580 won for 1 US military payment certificate.

3. Korean sources report that 2578050 suk of rice has been purchased by the govt by 5 Jan, representing 34.3% of the quota.

Subversive.

1. During this period police and constabulary of Cholla Namdo Province met in 3 engagements with raider resulting in the death of 100 guerrillas, 3 police, 3 constabulary and the wounding of 2 constabulary.

2. Police engaged a rebel force in Kyongsang Namdo, resulting in the killing of 12 rebels and 6 policemen.

3. In 4 attacks on villages and 1 attack on a constabulary unit, on Chejudo raiders lost 20 killed while 46 villagers and 1 police man were killed and 27 constabulary men wounded.

4. The provincial capitol building on Cheju Do (950-1150) was reportedly burned by saboteurs. All provincial records were lost.

5. 3 members of the Womens Union of the South Korea Labor Party are presently collecting signatures in the Province of Chung Chong Pukto on a Petiog objecting to the UNs recognition of the South Korean Govt.

Psychological.

1. The Korean Office of Public Info conducted a man-on-the-street opinion poll on current topics. Such matters as belief in UN recognition, legality of the present govt, need for land reform and economic superiority of rural over urban life received almost unanimous endorsement. Conversely, the work of police, school teachers and dilatory students, the existing tax system, contribution of more land to already rich farmers, sanitary facilities, public trans were condemned with equal unanimity. The results of the above poll were published in a Seoul newspaper for public edification.

Comment: The fact that findings were published in Dong A Ilbo, Seoul newspaper, shows an awakening consciousness on

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