

**Military, Political, Economic, Social Situation,  
Press Review, Civil Intelligence, Miscellaneous**

Selected items for the Information of Commanders  
and Staffs of the Far East Command

12 April 49  
No. 2407

MILITARY SITUATION

1. Recent Developments:

a. Marine Corps Activated: A Korean Marine Corps, activated on 5 Apr, will have a strength of approximately 1,000, according to present plans, based upon 25 per cent of the current naval strength of 4,042. Five hundred recruits for the Republic's new "arm of the service" are being trained at a school in Chinhae, South Kyongsang Province. Officer cadets of the marine corps will be obtained from the Korean Army's Military Academy in Seoul (Intell. Summary 2302). After six months' training at the military academy, the prospective marine corps officers will be transferred to the naval academy at Chinhae for completion of their course and subsequent commissioning. (C-3) (a)

Comment: The law on the organization of the national armed forces, passed by the National Assembly on 15 Nov 48, does not provide for a marine corps (Intell. Summary 2281). Activation of the marine corps is an ambitious undertaking, for a country economically weak as Korea. This action will cause a further drain on the Republic's budget, and places approximately 126,450 men, including the National Police, under arms. The Korean Republic continues to expand its armed forces despite the fact that it cannot arm and equip them without outside aid, presently coming from the U.S. However, President RHEE Syngman appears optimistic and recently sent an envoy to the U.S. to request additional arms and equipment (Intell. Summary 2394).

b. Rebel Activity Declines: Rebel activity in South Korea continued to decrease during the period 2-9 Apr. Minor incidents occurred in widely scattered areas throughout the southern provinces. South Cholla Province, scene of major rebel activity on the mainland in the past, remained quiet during the period. Operations by government forces, against rebels, were the only activities reported. Meanwhile, the main body of rebels in the western sector of South Kyongsang Province reportedly has moved into North Cholla Province. The rebels are under the leadership of KIM Chei Hwei, notorious guerrilla chief. (C-2) (a)

Source Comment: The aggressive action of the Korean Army task force is believed responsible for forcing the rebels to evacuate the mountainous area of western South Kyongsang Province. (a)

Comment: The government has had marked success in eliminating dissidents throughout South Korea, especially in South Cholla and South Kyongsang Provinces and Cheju Island (Intell. Summary 2402, 2403). Continued government successes against the rebels may result in comparative peace and quiet in Korea, after many years of internal strife and disorders.

POLITICAL REPORT

2. LEE Submits Resignation:

a. Not Yet Accepted: Prime Minister LEE Bum Suk submitted his resignation to President RHEE Syngman on 31 Mar, according to reliable Korean government sources. To date, no public announcement has been issued by official government sources. (B-2) (a,b)

Source Comment: The reported action of the Prime Minister likely was predicated on his disappointment over his loss of the Defense Ministry to SHIN Sung Mo in a cabinet shakeup on 21 Mar (Intell. Summary 2386). Although President RHEE has slowly been reducing the political power of Prime Minister LEE, it is doubtful that the resignation will be accepted because of the necessity for government unification. (a)

Comment: Although President RHEE publicly reaffirmed his trust in LEE on 7 Jan (Intell. Summary 2318), a rift between the two personalities has existed which could result in a complete split by LEE resigning from the position of Prime Minister.

(a) USAFIK 57870, 10 Apr 49 (b) USAFIK G-2 P/R 1098, 4 Apr 49