

• 1948년 12월의 정치요약(1949. 1. 10)

THE FOREIGN SERVICE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Despatch No. 16

American Mission in Korea

CONFIDENTIAL

Seoul, January 10, 1949

Subject: Political Summary for December 1948

DEPARTMENT OF
NORTH ASIAN AFFAIRS

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Sir:

In continuation of Despatch No. 122, December 17, 1948, summarizing political developments in Korea for November, 1948, I have the honor to report herewith on political developments in Korea for the month of December, 1948.

I - Summary

Reversing a trend of previous months, the Republic of Korea during December seemed to begin to settle down to work, to gain more confidence in its future, and to maintain internal peace and order more competently. A major factor in these hopeful signs was the Resolution passed by the United Nations General Assembly in Paris recognizing the legality of the Government in Seoul. Another was the apparent assurance that although some American troops might leave Korea, enough of a force would stay to bolster Korean Security forces temporarily during the coming critical period. A third was the laying of a foundation for improvement in the economic situation with the signing of the Korean-United States Economic Aid Agreement. Finally, the Government (Executive) and National Assembly improved relations when some Cabinet changes long sought by the latter, were made by the President.

There was, of course, still considerable friction. Reports of dissension between the President and Prime Minister would, if true, weaken the Administration at its top level. Communists were carrying out guerrilla operations in many sections of the country with disturbing frequency. The security forces required further training and augmentation of their strength, and there were fears yet remaining of what the North Koreans would do after the final evacuation of Soviet troops from their territory at the end of the month. Furthermore, the ineffective rice collection ("grain purchase") program which was putting totally inadequate stocks of food into the hands of Government rationing officials, foreshadowed a legacy of widespread urban suffering and discontent in the spring of 1949 unless strong and firm measures were taken immediately.

II - Disorders in South Korea

A lessening of noteworthy activity in Government circles during December makes it valuable to turn first attention to a matter that is not usually spectacularly noticeable in any one month (October 1948 excepted), but which continues steadily as a major factor in the political and economic life of South Korea. Herein is discussed, therefore, the pattern of Communist violence below the 38th parallel.

A perusal of Seoul newspapers reveals that they report virtually no information of the extent to which the Communists, whether as Constabulary rebels, South Korea Labor Party raiders, or North Korean agents, have kept large areas of South Korea in constant turmoil. Occasionally, papers will note a communique from the Police or Constabulary, but their inaccuracies only add to the picture that relative peace prevails. To give a more meaningful view of conditions, there is quoted below a summary of every Communist inspired incident involving mob action, combat, or violence reported for the month of December 1948 in the Headquarters, United States Army Forces in Korea G-2 Periodic Reports. Most of the information noted is based on reports from the Korean police, the Korean Constabulary, and the latter's American advisors.

City of Seoul

- December 5th: Bomb thrown at home of National Assembly member.
- 12th: Bomb thrown at home of National Assembly member.
- 14th: Rightist leader shot.

Kyunggi Province

- December 30th: Communists kill policemen in Incheon.
- 30th: Communists kill police informant in Incheon.

South Chungcheong Province

- December 2nd: Rightist leader killed.

Chajja Island

- December 3rd to 6th: Constabulary raids throughout island.
- 14th: Joint Constabulary-civilian raids on guerrillas.
- 15th: Constabulary and guerrillas in skirmish.
- 16th: Large guerrilla group surrenders after battle.
- 18th: Constabulary and guerrillas in skirmish.
- 19th: Guerrillas attack town; battle Constabulary rescue unit.
- 27th: Rebels attack police.

North Cholla Province

No raids reported but guerrillas reported building up concentrations in the nine mountainous counties of the province.

South Cholla Province (scene of the October Constabulary mutiny)

- December 1st: Constabulary fights rebels in three communities.
- 2nd: Guerrilla supply raid on villages.
- 3rd: Constabulary skirmish with rebels.
- 4th: Guerrilla supply raid on village.
- 4th: Constabulary raid on guerrilla hideout.

Sixth) the report that civilians on Chaju Island, where guerrillas have been fighting since April 1948, have largely ceased to aid the raiders, whom they once supported in large majority, and began to help loyal security forces is an extremely encouraging sign. It would indicate that even groups in the rural Korean population which distrust Government authority, eventually even more come to dislike the destructive and cruel practices of the guerrillas who burn villages, terrorize communities, kidnap and conscript villagers, and steal food and supplies. Seventh, December's experience shows that it is possible to have police and constabulary cooperating in action. It also shows both forces improving in aggressiveness, self-confidence, techniques, and results. If these tendencies continue and improve, it is possible that within six months, the internal situation in South Korea will be completely under control of loyal security forces.

IV - The Government

B. Relations with the Executive

Substantial Assembly business concerned matters involving its relations with one or another member of the State Council (Cabinet). Part of this was connected with above-noted activity on the still troubled situation in the revolt areas. The Assembly received a long written and oral report from Premier LEE Bom Suk which summarized operations against dissident groups in the four regions of Chaju Island, South Cholla Province, Kangwon Province, and Taegu, North Kyungsang Province (Despatch No. 14, January 10, 1949). The relatively rosy picture which was painted therein (containing for example the figure of three loyal forces dead against 422 rebel dead on Chaju Island since April 1948) did not fully satisfy the Assemblymen who proceeded to organize their own previously mentioned investigation committees and to urge the Government to pardon any rebels who voluntarily surrendered. Certainly, the facts which the Prime Minister disclosed in no way reported the situation as fully or frankly as in Part II of this Despatch.

Respectfully yours,


John J. Muccio

• 제주도에 추가 병력 파견(1949. 2. 2)

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From: USPOLAD Seoul, Korea sgd Muccio

To: Secretary of State

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2 February 1949
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