

It was a natural desire of US to withdraw its forces as soon as this could be done without imperiling Korean security and that I felt the training of Korean security forces had made such progress in recent months that withdrawal of American troops might be accomplished in the very near future. Rhee took this calmly, said he realized American troops could not be kept in Korea indefinitely and merely expressed hope they could be maintained until Republic had an adequate force to protect its interests and sufficient arms and ammunitions to supply its force. (Despatch 200, April 5).

Ministry of Defense and Social Affairs now Cheju-do Rhee personally going there Saturday. Upon his return hope to be able to have him include in his statement conditions, schedule and objectives of training of Korean security forces, and confidence that they are now competent to maintain stability and defend country and that he is therefore willing to withdraw American troops upon condition of continued presence American troops in Korea. Rhee will depart in this week and early next week. See also despatch regarding formal establishment of UN Command.

In discussing UNCOK matters with Principal Secretary on April 17, I inquired whether UNCOK had given any consent to December 12 resolution providing that occupational forces will be withdrawn as early as practicable. (See despatch 202, April 5). Upon receipt of CA on March 18 '49 as a result of Korean question, I made contacts between down to Principal Secretary, chairman (Chinese delegate) and French, Philippine and Salvadoran members, suggesting they might want to start talking about this and related questions.

It is proposed to send early next week communication to Principal Secretary (Salvadoran) in the form of a memorandum program and ask for any comments or views which the Commission might like to make regarding efficiency and adequacy of Korean security forces and timing of withdrawal. (Principal Secretary and French delegate both feel that December 12 resolution required UNCOK only to observe withdrawal and not participate in any decision regarding procedure).

UNCOK has taken no action on petition signed by 63 members National Assembly. Principal Secretary has said that at next formal meeting, scheduled next week, it was proposed to set up a sub-committee for the whole to consider this matter which would also be available to consider withdrawal and military observers. At present petition primarily internal political maneuver, embarrass Rhee. It has received little attention here.

• 제주도 소탕작전 상황(1949. 4. 9)

*The Special Representative in Korea (Muccio) to the Secretary
of State*

CONFIDENTIAL

SEOUL, April 9, 1949.¹

A-127. Defense Minister Sihm Sung Mo is now on Cheju Island at express request of President Rhee, with orders to remain until guerrillas have been wiped out and order restored. Previously, Sihm had been given similar instructions, when he was Minister of Home Affairs, but was called home in order to assume portfolio of defense. Just prior to his departure at the beginning of this week, he stated that the clean-up would be much easier now that he was working with Army assault forces instead of the less reliable and more timorous police. Actually, he said, the rebels were surrounded in their mountain strongholds, and could not hold out for much longer.

Fighting on Cheju has been sporadic for a long time. Pyongyang radio broadcasts have devoted long programs to the "celebration" of the one year's anniversary of the "partisan" fighting on the island, which began on April 3 of last year. Similar broadcasts in Korean from Moscow and Khabarovsk have referred to the revolt as the forerunner of the widespread armed resistance which is destined to sweep the country as soon as American troops have been withdrawn.

It is clear from the nature of the propaganda emanating from the Soviet-controlled radio that Cheju Island has been chosen as the spot for a major Soviet effort to sow confusion and terror in southern Korea. This has been accompanied by a continuing and similar operation on the land mass of the peninsula just north of the island, in the provinces of South Cholla and South Kyongsang. With such conditions deep in the rear areas of the Republic, President Rhee has been forced to take the decision to stamp out unrest and insecurity, so that the defense forces on the 38th parallel should not be lured away and dissipated in the internecine struggle which the Communists have hoped to make a permanent facet of the Korean scene.

It seems obvious that Soviet agents are being filtered into Cheju without great difficulty. Minister Sihm states that most of them arrived by small fishing boats from North Korea. While the Korean Coast Guard is endeavoring to patrol the coast of the island, says Sihm, it cannot possibly, with its present small complement of ships, maintain a tight blockade. While it has been a subject for some argument between the Prime Minister and Minister Sihm, and particularly in debates on the floor of the House, there have been persistent reports of Soviet ships and submarines around the island.

Photographs of operations on Cheju indicate unusual sadistic propensities on the part of both Government and guerrilla forces. Signal atrocities have been reported, indicating mass massacre of village populations, including women and children, accompanied by widespread looting and arson. In some cases the Army has been guilty of revenge operations against guerrillas which have brought down vengeance on unarmed villagers.

A Pyongyang broadcast of last Sunday was singularly revealing as

to the direct interest of the puppet People's Republic in the fighting on Cheju. Textually, the following was stated:

"Furthermore, they (the island guerrillas) are encouraged in their struggle by the fact that, under Premier Kim Il Sung, a sound democratic base has been built in the northern half of the Republic, and there is the strong Soviet Union behind us (*sic*). Also, the Cheju Islanders have a powerful people's coalition front.

"The activities of the armed guerrillas on Cheju Island became intensified following the formation of the Central Government of the Republic (of North Korea)."

Muccio

• 군사원조에 대한 이승만과 무쵸의 대화 비망록(1949. 4. 12)

THE FOREIGN SERVICE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

American Mission in Korea,

April 12, 1949

DIVISION OF
NORTHEAST ASIAN AFFAIRS
Noted - file
MAY 5 1949
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

No. 211

TOP SECRET

SUBJECT: President Rhee's Visit to Cheju and Military Aid for Korea

The American Mission in Korea has the honor to transmit for the Department's information a copy of a self-explanatory memorandum of conversation dated April 11, 1949.

Enclosure: *att*

1. Memorandum of Conversation dated April 11, 1949.

<첨부문서> 이승만의 제주도 방문과 대한군사원조(1949. 4. 11)

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

April 11, 1949

Subject: President Rhee's visit to Cheju and military aid for Korea

Participants: President Rhee
Mr. Muccio