Reports also bring news of successes. The most positive of these have recently emanated from Chojoo Inland, where operations appear now to have almost entered the mopping-up stage. But good news has not been absent from the southern provinces. Both newspapers and private Korean or American sources indicate that increased numbers of rebel sympathizers have been surrendering, mostly to local police.

MAY

PUBLIC

▪ 유엔한국위원단 제주 방문 예정(1949. 4. 16)

DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS
TELEGRAPH BRANCH

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

INCOMING TELEGRAM

SECRET

1949 APR 18 AM 8 34

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4/17/49, 10 p.m.
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Control 5941

Rec'd April 15, 1949
11:33 p.m.

FROM: Seoul

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 401, April 16, 1 p.m.

Following UNCOK developments have taken place since OURTEL 359, April 9:

1. Staff member returned Seoul. Letter due arrive north Korea April 25. (Paragraph 1 OURTEL 262, March 19).

2. Commission met April 13 consider answer to questionnaire regarding intentions UNCOK submitted by representatives Korean press opposed Rhee 30 March.

3. Observer suggestion not yet formally introduced UNCOK.

4. Subcommittee I heard Finance Minister Kim Do Yun. Subcommittee II heard Home Minister Kim Hyo Suk.

5. UNCOK party visiting Cheju do April 18-April 21.

MUCCIO

▪ 1949년 3월의 정치요약(1949. 4. 18)

THE FOREIGN SERVICE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Despatch No. 222

American Mission in Korea

CONFIDENTIAL

Seoul, April 18, 1949

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Return to CA/P Files
[illegible]

Subject: Political Summary for March, 1949

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington

Sir:

In continuation of Despatch No. 142, March 17, 1949, reporting on political developments in Korea for the month of February, 1949, I have the honor to submit a review of political developments in March, 1949.

I. SUMMARY

The month of March was on the whole encouraging, so far as the Republic of Korea's internal affairs were concerned, but disappointing on the question of unification of North and South. The United Nations Commission on Korea began its consultations with Koreans, but heard nothing except the Korean government's not very well presented point of view. UNCOK took little constructive action other than to dispatch a communication to KIM Il Sung stating the Commission's desire to enter North Korea.

On the international scene, the Republic of the Philippines recognized the Republic of Korea, and Korean Ambassador John Myun CHANG presented his credentials in Washington. Conferees in Japan arrived at a draft arrangement for trade between Japan and Korea. Sixty-three National Assembly members signed a petition to UNCOK asking withdrawal of foreign troops.

VII. SOUTH KOREAN INTERNAL TRANQUILLITY

A. The General View. Two members of the Mission staff returned in early March from a trip around South Korea (Despatch No. 153, March 17, 1949) with an overall impression that peaceful conditions prevailed through most of South Korea's cities and towns, and in most rural areas of Kyunggi, North and South Ch'oongch'ung, and North Chulla Provinces. In South Chulla Province, on the other hand, guerrilla forces had most of the rural areas under their con-

trol or in perpetual ferment, the only safe locations being population centers and places on main communication routes. The same was true to a limited extent of certain rural regions in North Kyungsang Province. Remote mountainous areas in South Kyungsang and Kangwon Provinces also sheltered small rebel bands who made occasional forays into farm villages. Chejoo Island was virtually overrun early in the month by rebels operating from the central mountain peak. During the month, except for much improvement in Chejoo, great activity in South Chulla, and a new outcropping of trouble in the mountainous area south of Taejun, the situation remained about the same.

Seoul, regarded as a haven from Communism for the persecuted country squire, was the scene of two assassinations: of Mrs. Ethel Underwood on March 17th, and PAK Il Wun, noted anti-Communist campaigner and former police official, on March 27th. An attempt was made on the life of SOH Chin Tai, dean of the Normal College, Seoul National University, on March 7th. Plans for tremendous violence and bloodshed on Sam-Il Day (March First), the thirtieth anniversary of the famous Korean Independence movement of 1919, were rumored as usual, but fizzled completely into an orderly observance of the holiday without untoward incident of any kind.

B. Chejoo Island. Until early March, officials of the Korean government seemed strangely indifferent to this running sore in the body politic. Police confined their activities to the comparatively safe Chejoo Town; the Army operated strictly within its garrisons; and rebel sympathizers numbering possibly 15,000, sparked by a trained core of 150 to 600 fighters, controlled most of the island. A third of the population had crowded into Chejoo Town, and 65,000 were homeless and without food.

The government was finally moved to take action. Spurred on by reports from visiting islanders on Seoul and comment in the Assembly, together with information from American sources, Home Minister Sihn went to Chejoo himself in early March and accomplished a great deal in initiating effective offensive action against the rebels. (Reference Mission Despatches 145, March 14, and 167, March 22, 1949.) Four battalions of Army troops have now driven the rebels back up the mountain, leaving the police to protect the towns on the coast. Four Navy vessels are patrolling around the island. Economic aid is flowing in; 1,406 tons of American flour were shipped to Chejoo in the last week of the month. In general it appears that Chejoo will soon be restored to tranquillity, although the tremendous damage to crops, land, and buildings will burden the insular economy for some time to come.

C. South Chulla Province. An all-out offensive against rebels in the Chiri Mountain region began on March 12th, and has continued aggressively, with four battalions of Army troops committed. Glowing accounts of the results have appeared in the press: the new policy of amnesty to repentant rebels has yielded a large number of surrenders, and rebel casualties are reported as high as two dozen in a single engagement.

It is too early to evaluate the success of the campaign. Pressure on the population around Chiri Mountain has eased up, but unrest

continued elsewhere in the province. The able young commander of a unit in South Chulla Province was killed in an engagement twenty miles south of the capital. One observer believes that the coming of Spring will bring increased guerrilla activity because fighting is easier in warm weather, and the foliage affords better concealment. One definite result of the Chiri campaign has been to drive some of the rebels out of the area, northward along the mountain range into areas which have been quiet for a year or more. Evidence points to future trouble in the vicinity of Taejun, which is now a model city, as Korean cities go. The nature of rebel operations, and the rugged terrain in which they operate, make a quick, complete defeat highly improbable.

Reports told of improved relations between soldiers and citizens in the Chiri area. One unit even hauls food and firewood for villagers at times. Part of the credit belongs to a new brigade commander in this area, General WUN.

John J. Muccio
Special Representative

▪ 제주도 사태 호전(1949. 4. 22)

INCOMING AIRGRAM

DEPARTMENT OF STATE DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS TELEGRAPH BRANCH

DIVISION OF
NORTHEAST ASIAN AFFAIRS

MAY - 3 1949

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

From: [illegible]

Date of [illegible]: April 27, 1949

Rec'd: May 6, 1949 11:20 a.m.

OFFICE OF FAR EASTERN AFFAIRS
MAY 3 1949
DIRECTOR
Department of State

Secretary of State,

[illegible]

A-112, April 22, 1949.

Reference is made to this mission's despatches nos. 107, March 23, 1949, [illegible], April 12, 1949, and section two of despatch no. 222, April 18, 1949, on the subject of developments on Cheju Island.

As has been reported, President Rhee made a flying trip to Cheju Island on April 9. It is understood from foreign missionaries who were on the island at the time that the President's trip made a good impression on the Cheju natives and had a salutary effect. Moreover, the new minister of defense, Captain [illegible], revisited Cheju during the first week in April on instructions from the President. The minister of defense for several days supervised the conduct of military operations on the island. At the same time, he took an active hand in the administration of relief to the many thousands of refugees. Another high official visitor to the Island was the Minister of Social Affairs, Mr. [illegible].

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