

June 27, 1960

**Information Report Sent by Lajos Karsai to Minister
of Foreign Affairs Endre Sík, 'Visit of Korean
Provisional Chargé d'Affaires Baek Cheongwon'**

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Summary:

Lajos Karsai reports on the character of protests in South Korea, labeling the protest movement as generally anti-Syngman Rhee.

Original Language:

Hungarian

Contents:

Translation - English

To Minister Endre Sík, 1st D. Minister János Péter, D. Minister Károly Szarka,
Assistant Under-Secretary Márta Kolozs, Departmental Head János Radványi,
Departmental Head Péter Várkonyi.

On 23 June of this year [...] I sent for Comrade Baek Cheongwon, the DPRK's
Provisional Chargé d'Affaires in Budapest.

[...]

With regard to the South Korean [emphasis in the original] situation, Com. Baek
Cheongwon made the following evaluation:

The leading elements of the South Korean mass demonstration of April were
composed of students and the urban petty bourgeoisie. In essence, the workers and
peasants did not voice their opinion. The slogans were just political ones. The main
thrust of popular wrath was directed against Syngman Rhee, and Syngman Rhee
indeed fled from it.

The reasons for the non-appearance of the workers and peasants in April were the
following:

1.) There is no Marxist-Leninist party in South Korea. The working class lacks a
vanguard, either in a legal or an illegal form. The revolutionary guiding force is
missing.

2.) The South Korean working class does not constitute an organized force, partly
because of the absence of the party, and partly because of its divided character. In
South Korea, industrial enterprises employing no more than 20-30 workers make up
95 percent of all...industrial enterprises.

3.) The peasantry is also divided. At present there are 2.2 million peasant families
registered in South Korea, and 70.5 per cent of them own no more than 1.5 chongbo
(approx. 1 Hungarian acre) per family. In South Korea, the oppression of the
peasantry takes place primarily in an indirect way, that is, through the landlords.
Therefore, the main thrust of peasant discontent is directed against the landlords
instead of the government. [...]

Since 1 May, a qualitative change has taken place in the South Korean mass
protests. According to the news, workers' strikes have become increasingly frequent.
Their main demands are the observance of the eight-hour workday and rising wages.
All kinds of parties are mushrooming, and they are demanding new parliamentary
elections in addition to the new presidential election. The masses (now even the
workers and the peasants) are pressing for punitive measures against Rheeist
officials. A mass movement to take the Rheeist murderers to task is in the making in
South Korea. Its initiators are the relatives of the slaughtered. [...] The movement
started in Gochang district.

So far the Korean Workers' Party and the government of the DPRK have not
supported any of the South Korean parties, they are just following their activity with
close attention. [...] The transitional government, though it is barely different from
that of Syngman Rhee in its composition and aims, no longer emphasizes the military
unification of the country; it prefers unification through so-called "free elections"
under UN supervision. "As is well-known, the government of the DPRK cannot agree
with the idea of [holding] all-Korean elections under the aegis of the UN while it is in
essence at war with the UN," Com. Baek Cheongwon emphasized. Then he went on to

say the following:

Now more and more people in South Korea are pressing for the establishment of postal, travel, economic, and cultural contacts between the South and the North. This mainly results from the fact that since the April events, more and more people in South Korea are listening to the North Korean broadcasts directed toward South Korea.

South Korean parliamentary elections are due to be held this July. Of the 233 seats in parliament, Syngman Rhee's Liberal Party has hitherto occupied 150 seats. In April, 110 Liberal deputies resigned their seats in the wake of the events.

The recently formed South Korean Renovation Party has begun to voice remarkable slogans:

- 1.) Free parliamentary elections!
- 2.) Rheeists—individuals who occupied important central or provincial posts under Syngman Rhee, i.e. police and military officers, officials, etc.—must not stand for election!
- 3.) Exchange of mail must be established between South and North Korea without delay!
- 4.) Negotiations must be started on the peaceful unification of the country!
- 5.) A joint South-North commission entrusted with entering into negotiations must be established!
- 6.) All Rheeist hirelings must be relieved of their posts!
[...]

Lajos Karsai