

**August 5, 1953**

**Summary Record of the Conference held between  
President Rhee and Secretary Dulles (First Session)**

**Citation:**

"Summary Record of the Conference held between President Rhee and Secretary Dulles (First Session)", August 5, 1953, Wilson Center Digital Archive, B-380-006, Papers Related to the Korean American Mutual Defense Treaty, Papers Related to Treaty-Making and International Conferences, Syngman Rhee Institute, Yonsei University <https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/119395>

**Summary:**

In early August of 1950, delegates from the United States and the Republic of Korea met to discuss the logistics for the forthcoming conferences centered on the creation of a strong US-ROK mutual defense treaty. The delegates also propose who can and should be present. While both sides agree that North Korea and China should be included, President Rhee advocates that due to India's Prime Minister's "pro-communist views," India should not be invited.

**Credits:**

This document was made possible with support from Syngman Rhee Institute, Yonsei University

**Original Language:**

English

**Contents:**

Original Scan

cc all refs

Summary Record of the Conference held between  
President Rhee and Secretary Dulles

Time: 10 a.m. to 11.30 a.m., August 5, 1953 (First session)

Place: Kyung Mu Dai.

Attending members: Korean side:- President Rhee, Prime Minister Paik,  
Foreign Minister Pyun, Defence Minister  
Sohn and Minister Kim to Japan.

U.S. side:- Secretary Dulles, Assistant Secretary Robertson,  
Ambassador Lodge, Assistant Secretary McCardle,  
Ambassador Briggs, Director Young and  
Consultant Dean.

After exchanging words of greetings by both sides, Secretary Dulles opened the talks by saying that it was a unique matter for the United States in all her diplomatic history to have sent out to such a distant land a mission of this nature to negotiate on many important questions, including a treaty. The mere fact that they came, Mr. Dulles said, meant something. Mr. Dulles then asked President Rhee whether he saw the papers containing the suggested items to be discussed on this occasion, after which the discussion turned to the subject of determining the date, place, etc. for the forthcoming political conference. Mr. Dulles asked President Rhee whether he had any particular date in mind that he might like to suggest, to which question President Rhee replied that he would like to have the conference held as early as possible. Secretary Dulles then suggested October 15th, 1953 as the desirable date for all but President Rhee replied that he would prefer to have it held on October 1st if that is possible. Mr. Dulles explained that the U.N. conference starts on August 17th and lasts for ten days, after which a notice of at least 30 day period will be necessary for the opening of the political conference. Under such circumstances, the earliest practical date would be October 1st, but should that date meet with any disagreement on the other side, October 15th would prevail. ~~President Rhee disagreed and insisted on an earlier date.~~

- 2 -

As for the choice of the conference site, Mr. Dulles again<sup>d</sup> first sought the opinion of President Rhee, who suggested that somewhere in the United States would be most desirable, say Honolulu. Ambassador Lodge expressed his doubt as to whether Russia would ever agree to holding a conference of such a political nature on the American soil. President Rhee then expressed the desire that the place should be one where no British influence would likely prevail. Mexico and Latin American countries were also considered.

Regarding the agenda for the conference, it was mutually agreed that the conference should be confined to the discussion of Korean problems only.

The question of which nations should participate in the conference was also asked President Rhee by Mr. Dulles, who replied that China, North Korea, United States and Republic of Korea should be the ~~most~~ ones entitled to participate. India, President Rhee said, should not be allowed to participate because the gentleman who leads that country is pro-Communist and anti-American. Mr. Dulles presented his view that India is placed in the shadow of possible Communist aggression and follows a policy which would not bring her into conflict with Red China. Nehru's way of thinking, he said, is after all not so bad as <sup>the</sup> President thinks. President Rhee replied that what one may think is one and what one actually does is another. Mr. Dulles then asked Ambassador Lodge that if only the countries that have fighting forces in Korea were to participate in the conference, would India be left out? Mr. Lodge answered that India has an ambulance unit in Korea, to which President Rhee said that if India were to use that unit as her ground for taking part in the conference, then she may take it back. President Rhee further pointed out that India did not send any armed men to Korea.

- 3 -

As regards the duration of the conference, Mr. Dulles said that he had <sup>90 days. and</sup> nothing more to add to what has already been agreed upon.

Coming to the subject of the Security Treaty, Mr. Dulles said that in order to expedite the matter, he would suggest designation of a working group on each side to study in detail the drafts of the contemplated treaty. Mr. Dulles designated Mr. Young and Mr. Dean for the American side and President Rhee designated Foreign Minister Pyun and Minister Kim to Japan for the Korean side. Both sides agreed that the newly designated working groups meet the same afternoon at 3.30 o'clock.

President Rhee said that the treaty must safeguard Korea not only against Communist aggression but also against possible Japanese military resurgence. Mr. Dulles agreed that aggression means any aggression from outside and assured President Rhee that the United States does not like to see Japan resurging as a military power. He added that the maximum military strength that will be ~~ax~~ allowed Japan will be 10 divisions and that without sea or air power. President Rhee asked Secretary Dulles to make the treaty a strong one, to which Secretary Dulles replied that the strength of a treaty lies in the spirit behind it and that spirit means close cooperation with each other. President Rhee assured that Korea will cooperate with the United States ~~to the fullest possible extent,~~ but that cooperation does not necessarily mean obedience. Mr. Dulles said that the treaty should be a warning to the enemy. President Rhee said that in order to let the Korean people understand the situation fully, Korea should be given firm assurances by the United States.

(end)