

March 8, 1957
**CDS Report No. 36 from Choi Duk Shin to the
President (Syngman Rhee)**

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Summary:

Choi Duk Shin reports on anti-communist strategies, South Vietnam's protest over KNA's flight over Vietnamese soil, and Vietnamese affairs.

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CONFIDENTIAL.

CDS REPORT NO.036

Excellency,

I have the honour to submit my Weekly Report No.036 covering the following points:

1. Receipt of Instructions
2. Some thoughts on the Strategy of Combating the Communists
3. Official note of protest from the Government of Vietnam concerning the KNA's flying over the territory of Vietnam without prior knowledge.
4. Vietnam Affairs
5. Social Activities

1. Receipt of Instructions.

In the last pouch I received Instruction Paper No. 46 addressed to my First Secretary, Mr. B.S. Sohn, which is in acknowledgment of his communication dated February 15, 1957. In this Instruction No. 46 Your Excellency has indicated that our police had already left for Saigon to take custody of the two stowaways and return them to Korea. I have, however, to report to Your Excellency the fact that up to the time of this report the said police have not yet arrived nor has any information concerning their arrival been received. The Vietnamese police are anxious to hand over the custody of these two stowaways as soon as possible.

-2-

In the same pouch I also received Instruction No. 47 which acknowledges receipt of my Weekly Report No.034 and my Special Report No. 1. In this same Instruction Your Excellency also expressed sorrow at the attempted assassination of the President of Vietnam and also expressed the hope that the official who was hit by the bullet had recovered. I visited the wounded official, Secretary of State for Agrarian Reform, Mr. Do Van Cong, and conveyed to him from Your Excellency an expression of good wishes for his recovery, and carried with me for him some flowers. He expressed most heartily his deep appreciation of the concern of Your Excellency. The doctor told me that Secretary Cong's wound is not serious. However, due to the warm weather his recovery will last another 20 days.

In Instruction No.48 there is enclosed THE KOREAN CORRESPONDENT NO.72.

2. Some thoughts on the Strategy of Combating the Communists.

It will not be necessary to report to Your Excellency the details of recent happenings in the adjacent countries such as in Thailand, the post-election unrest; in Indonesia, the military men becoming more or less "war-lords" of old times and the Communist infiltration no longer being secret; in Laos, palace wrestling is continuing hotly. In Malaya, the Communist rebels may again become active and vigorous after the announcement of independence at the end of August of this year. In Singapore, each minute there is existence of grave danger. In Burma, the former Premier has again come to power: however, I doubt if there will be an improvement in the situation because of his return to power. 199

-3-

The leaders of the Free World should realize fully the existence of real danger in South Asia and that this danger is more grave than that existing anywhere else in the world. One main reason for this warning is the existence of a large population of Overseas Chinese. Since the mainland of China is still occupied by the Reds, the threat and real danger will never cease.

I clearly recall the words of Your Excellency to the Chinese people in November of 1953 and again to the American people in July of 1954. If Your Excellency will permit me I shall quote a portion of your statement as follows:

".....The return of the Chinese Mainland to the side of the Free World would automatically produce a victorious end to the wars in Korea and Indo-China, and would swing the balance of power so strongly against the Soviet Union that it would not dare to risk war with the United States. Unless we win China back, an ultimate victory for the Free World is unthinkable"

However, the years have passed and the basic strategy of combating the world Communists has not changed at all. More and more the people of the Free World are gradually getting to understand the meaning of the statement of Your Excellency of three years ago. We are glad to note that Free China's responsible top officials are now openly proclaiming that they will invade the Mainland and free the enslaved people.

Since Your Excellency's trip to Taiwan and the announcement of the basic strategy to the world, I have been honoured to have made many trips to this general area. I feel obliged to closely watch the development of the situation in this area. May I, Your Excellency, express some of my own thoughts on the strategy of combating the Communists as I see it as follows:

-4-

a. In the implementation of Your Excellency's suggested strategy the past three years was the period during which the advance of the Communists should have been stopped. In order for us to advance, we must first stop the advance of the enemy. This has been successful in Vietnam. And the Free World also set up SEATO to prevent further advance of the enemy toward South East Asia. Though SEATO is so far not quite successful and strong enough, the effort to stop the advance is still commendable. Although we cannot count on SEATO to become a combined force of advance, however, it can be of assistance in the said strategy as a secondary front

b. I believe there are only three forces who have the capability to execute the big strategy of Your Excellency. They are, Korea, China and U.S.A. We, the Koreans, have long since been determined to go forward alone, if necessary. The expressions by the Chinese top leaders of their firmness to recover their mainland are mostly welcomed by the patriotic Overseas Chinese in this general area. And I believe it will be supported by the majority of Chinese people in the Mainland too.

The only thing left for the execution of this big strategy is the decision of the U.S. Government. I feel the time has come for Korea and China to make a coordinated diplomatic effort to persuade the U.S. Government in this big issue.

c. Many high-ranking officials of the U.S. Government from President Eisenhower down are well known strategists. In the principles of war there is a principle called 'mass' which is the concentration of superior forces on the ground; at sea, and in the air, at the decisive place and time, ^{and}/their employment in a decisive direction, creates conditions essential to victory. Such concentration requires strict economy in the

strength of forces assigned to secondary missions. I understand the Middle East and South Asia are counted as "secondary missions". The main and primary mission is assigned to the forces which will directly affect the advance to the mainland of China; these forces are the forces of Korea and China. Since the U.S. has succeeded, or will succeed, in the secondary areas to prevent the 'further advance' of the enemy; now is the time to put the main efforts on our joint fronts.

d. Of course, we could not count on the British to take an active role in this strategy. However, we should make some effort to prevent the 'dragging' of the legs of the U.S. in participating in this big strategy. I recommend we should have strong diplomatic representation in London. I was very sorry to have learned of the passing of the late Mr. Myo Muk Lee after his great accomplishment in his duty in the diplomatic field in London. It will be necessary to replace him with a likewise capable diplomatic representative in order to achieve the above mentioned task.

e. Close cooperation and coordination are necessary with Free China, especially in the military field. We are in a position to tell them that we should have a combined determination to go forward alone, if necessary, and, further, to tell them the only force in Asia who can help them recover the Mainland are the Korean Forces, not those of the Japanese.

f. Recently, there were proposals for an anti-Communist alliance by Free China and the Philippines. Neither the Philippines' "Join SEATO" nor China's proposal of a separate alliance are practical or beneficial.

If we join SEATO, our hands will be tied. China's proposal to form a separate SEATO offers no attempt to take offensive action, it is designed only for defensive purpose.

-6-

If there is going to be a military alliance, it should be one which is designed to execute Your Excellency's Big Strategy. That is, to recover the Mainland of China.

There are only four nations who will directly affect this basic strategy; they are Korea, United States, Free China and Free Vietnam.

Since there are in existence some delicate problems on the part of Vietnam and U.S.A., a full realization of this military alliance cannot be expected in the near future. However, closer coordination and cooperation between these concerned countries on this matter are necessary.

As far as the role of Free Vietnam on this strategy is concerned, the present government will do her part to advance and recover her Northern territory in case changes would occur in the Mainland of China. Her role will be a limited one, but a useful one.

3. Official note of protest from the Government of Vietnam concerning the KNA's flying over the territory of Vietnam without prior knowledge.

300
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It is with regret and a certain degree of shame that I must make a report to Your Excellency that this is the first time in the history of this Legation that we have received a protest from the Government of Vietnam. I attach a copy of the official note from the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs with this report. Copies will go to our Foreign Minister and through him to the responsible official of the Korean National Airlines.

This Legation has had no information concerning this flight either from HongKong or from Seoul.

I am awaiting instructions from our Foreign Minister before replying to the formal note of the Vietnamese Government.

209

4. Vietnam Affairs.

a. Vietnam-China Relations.

There has been no improved development of relationship of these two countries since my last report to Your Excellency concerning this matter.

The first Free China's diplomatic envoy arrived here in the early part of this year. The Chinese people here had counted a great deal on the envoy's coming. However, after two months of his arrival no single thing has been solved. This is not due to inability on the part of the envoy. It is because the Vietnamese Government will not yield one space of ground on the principle. However, the Vietnamese Government is gradually growing milder in her attitude toward the Chinese. No more strong words are appearing in the Vietnamese papers blaming the Chinese. On the contrary, the Chinese newspapers are commencing to speak out on the problem.

Two days ago, on the 6th of March, was exactly six months which had passed from the date the Decree of the 11 forbidden professions to foreigners had gone into effect: Seven of these professions should have terminated in six months, the other five in one year. However, up to this time, there is no evident sign that the Vietnamese Government has enforced this decree. Several observers here say that the Vietnamese are not yet in a position to take over all the "professions forbidden to foreigners". Also it is said that the Chinese businessmen's passive resistance threatens the daily life of the Vietnamese people. Further, it is thought that there may be corrupt elements in the government officials circle to aid in this passive resistance of the Chinese people. It is considered it would be very dangerous to leave the problems unsettled because when the Chinese become desperate they could be successful in disturbing the economic structure of Vietnam

-8-

by using the corrupt elements in the Vietnamese Government.

Furthermore, I am not sure that there is not Communist infiltration on both sides: namely, the Chinese society and the Vietnamese Government.

For the sake of the common anti-Communist front and for the benefit of both friendly nations, I wish they could find a compromised solution. The prolongment of a settlement is creating a grave danger.

b. Vietnamese Women's Day.

The day of March 7th each year is reserved to honour the Vietnamese National Heroines, the Trung Sisters who revolted against Chinese domination at the first century of the Vietnamese era to restore national independence. Ceremony is held each year on this day to commemorate the memory of these two heroines in their struggle against an invader.

This year the President of the Republic of Vietnam appointed his sister-in-law and official hostess, Madame Ngo Dinh Nhu, to represent him at the official ceremonies. This was his way of indicating to the people that the day was purely a women's day and also that Vietnam has emancipated her women.

Mrs. Choi was invited by Madame Ngo Dinh Nhu to attend the ceremonies. Many dignitaries were present. The ceremony was conducted entirely by the women of Vietnam. There was a mass attendance which terminated in a very large parade led by two elephants upon which were seated two women who represented the Trung sisters.

The day has been declared a legal Vietnamese holiday.

c. Anniversary of First Election.

On March 4th of this year was the first anniversary of the first general elections to the National Assembly. Almost

-9-

all the Vietnamese newspapers on this day devoted their editorials to this historic event and passed in review the progress realized by the Government of Vietnam during the past twelve months.

For the first time in history, the Vietnamese citizens on March 4th, 1956 went to the polls with great joy and elected their representatives to the Constituent Assembly. This Constituent Assembly had accomplished its drafting of the Constitution which saw its promulgation on the 26th of October and the same Assembly changed into the Legislative Assembly. The same day of 26th October was the first anniversary of the National referendum to proclaim the Republic.

The members of the Assembly are to be admired for their endeavours in an effort to make these various laws with their inexperience and lack of knowledge of legislative affairs. The foundation of this New Republic was commenced on March 4th of last year and has grown rapidly in its goal towards a true democracy.

5. Social Activities.

On the evening of March 2 Mrs. Choi and I were invited to a buffet dinner prepared by Colonel and Mrs. Woodbury, the Chief Military Attache of the American Embassy. The Thai Ambassador, the Italian Minister, the Charges d'affaires of the U.S. A. and United Kingdom were also at the dinner. All were accompanied by their wives. It was a very informal nice gathering.

On the evening of March 3 Mrs. Choi and I were invited by Mr. and Mrs. Eggers to an informal buffet dinner. Many intimate friends were gathered at their home.

On the evening of March 4 a Reception was given by the Vietnamese Naval Chief of Staff in honour of the visiting Thai Military Mission. Mrs. Choi and I were amongst the invited guests.

206

-10-

On the evening of March 5, the Free Pacific Association, which is sponsored by Chinese Archbishop Yu-Pin, invited Mrs. Choi and I for cocktails. Many Vietnamese high-ranking officials and members of the Diplomatic Corps were present.

With sentiments of deepest loyalty and highest esteem.

Respectfully,



Choi Duk Shin

Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary
of Republic of Korea to Vietnam

His Excellency

President of Republic of Korea.