

June 15, 1954
**Asian Peoples' Anti-Communist Conference, Press
Release No. 2**

Citation:

"Asian Peoples' Anti-Communist Conference, Press Release No. 2", June 15, 1954, Wilson Center Digital Archive, B-388-025, Documents Related to the Asian Anti-Communist League Conference, Papers Related to Treaty-Making and International Conferences, Syngman Rhee Institute, Yonsei University.
<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/118334>

Summary:

President Syngman Rhee proposes a "Pacific Pact or Alliance of Mutual Security" for non-communist countries in the Asia Pacific.

Credits:

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

Original Language:

English

Contents:

Original Scan

ASIAN PEOPLES' ANTI-COMMUNIST CONFERENCE

15 June 1954
Chinhae, Korea

INFORMATION SERVICE

For Press Release No.2TEXT OF SPEECH BY PRESIDENT SYNGMAN RHEE AT CHINHAE JUNE 15

First of all, my very good friends and neighbors, let me bid you a most cordial welcome to Korea and Chinhae. We are deeply happy that you have come, and I am sure that all of us are firmly resolved to make this conference a truly momentous occasion in the history of Free East Asia. I shall try to tell you briefly this morning about some of the purposes and intentions that led us to call you together. Please understand that I am not attempting to influence you in any way, but am merely citing the record so that all of us will start these proceedings with a common fund of information.

We have heard much discussion, in recent months, of a Pacific Pact or Alliance of Mutual Security. But until today all of this has been only talk. Nothing really concrete has been done—not because of disinclination to act, but because the Pacific countries themselves did not get together. Attempts by other nations of other continents to establish such a movement will come to naught, as we already have seen in Europe. NATO stands as the prime example that such an alliance must come from within instead of being superimposed from without. The individual national member of NATO does not realize the nature of the Communist menace, and some of them are so far gone as to be unwilling to make equal and just contributions of their own to the common cause. This is not the kind of an organization we want in the Pacific. As a contrast, look at what the Communists are doing; they are willing to sacrifice everything for Communism.

So it is that we feel the time has come for the Pacific countries to do something for themselves -- to take a common action for the common security before it is too late. In our certainty that the Pacific nations have a strong desire for their own organization, we took steps to make possible a conference where Pacific countries and peoples could get together and express their desires. All of us who realize so strongly the grave dangers of Communist expansion thus may begin—even on a small scale—a movement that will stop the enemy and eventually push him back toward the oblivion that is so essential if Free Man is to survive.

As you all know, President Chiang and I happened to be together some months ago and thought of this question. We agreed at that time to invite the anti-Communist nations to get together, and have been trying to do so ever since. This sort of thing is a large undertaking that is fraught with difficulties. We have therefore not been successful in persuading all the nations that should be here to come. In some cases, however, that is probably not the result of a lack of interest, but of the fact that some countries do not know precisely what we are trying to do. We cannot blame them for their caution. In the troubled world of today we cannot expect nations to shut their eyes and plunge into movements that they feel they know nothing about.

Some nations may have thought that we were seeking to get them together to tell them what to do—that we were inviting our neighbors to come and endorse some plan that we had arrived at unilaterally. That is not true. It is not the spirit of this conference. Our idea is very simple and represents the essence of democratic practice. It is simply that we all get together to express our feelings and our suggestions. We shall give voice to ours, and you to yours. Then we shall put our ideas and proposals

together and let the majority decide in favor of those that appear to have the greatest merit. That is why there is no fixed and definite agenda for this conference. What we say and do will grow out of our needs and our common experience.

We have come to realize, in setting up this conference, that governments involved in international relations do not feel at liberty to act freely until they have consulted all their friends and neighbors, and until they find everything is fully and clearly understood. Until that time comes, they hesitate. But it was not possible to be completely explicit preliminary to this conference. That is the prime reason for the holding of this meeting: so that we can be definite and to the point in our further relationships with all the Free Nations of our own region and of the rest of the world.

We presumably are most interested here in getting the peoples of the East Asian nations to exchange views, to discuss ways and means, and to draw up a resolution agreeable to the majority on an effective joint effort to check and eventually to reverse the terrible reality of continued Communist expansion. The Communists are successful everywhere because they are organized. They speak, act, and plan with concerted effort. Their final aggressions are achieved by force of arms, but their ideological front is even stronger and more important than their military front. Utilizing propaganda, infiltration, sabotage, and similar weapons, they are winning the support of millions of people everywhere. Mere military strength will not be enough to save the Free Nations. We can establish great armies, navies, and air forces, but if we do not win the battle of ideas, our military victories will mean little or nothing. If we can win back these lost peoples, we may not have to fight another great war. We are in awful peril today only because we have done nothing at the peoples' level during the last 40 years.

The Communist movement places strong emphasis on the unity of peoples, and that is perhaps the principal reason for its awesome successes. We, too,

must make our bid to unite the people of the world in the cause of freedom and justice. We must try to win back the uneducated, the uninformed, and the disinterested, and all those who have been deceived by Communist propaganda. We must persuade them of the horrors of Communism, which destroys the individual, and enlist them in an anti-Communist crusade that affords the only hope for saving all that we hold precious. This campaign must include the organization of anti-Communist societies, the conducting of investigations of Communism and its nefarious plots, and the encouragement of searchlight publicity that will expose the enemy and the enslavement that he is planning for all of us. The people of the world must be enlightened. They must be told and shown the menace of Communist aggression. If we can do that, we can be assured that all decent, thinking, liberty-loving peoples will be on our side—including the countless millions of Chinese and Russians who hate Communism as deeply as we do.

In some countries the governments are already Communist or Communist-inclined. You, who are patriotic citizens of your beloved homeland and who realize so well that the Communists seek to make your countries satellites of the Soviet, may have to risk your lives by organizing revolutionary movements or anti-Communist fronts. In doing so profit by the example that the Communists have set in their own international conspiracy. Make your movement as strong as possible, and do it quickly. Leave no avenue of appeal or persuasion untraveled. Unless you fight back now, and persuade millions of others to fight with you, your nation will perish, and the end of all freedom everywhere will be that much closer. Today your life is not your own; it is dedicated, as are the lives of all free men, to the principle that death is better than life under Communist oppression.

These have been some of the things, my friends, that are uppermost in our minds. If all or some of you should agree with our views, in general, we shall accept that agreement as an expression of your true sentiments and not as a merely courteous affirmative. On the other hand, if all or some of

you disagree, we want you to feel perfectly free to express your own views. Then, after full exchange of ideas and adequate discussion, we can arrive at common understanding and agree upon objectives and a statement of them. We shall support just as enthusiastically and persistently as we can anything that you do here which is helpful and to the advantage of democracy and the freedom of man.

As everyone knows, one of our primary aims is the establishment of an anti-Communist movement. We believe that if such a movement is to be effective, it must start with a singleness of purpose that will bar membership to any nation or people whose attitude is not definitely and positively against Communism. We must, in other words, protect ourselves against destruction from within. This same singleness of purpose also should lead us to invite the immediate participation of every nation and people that is known to be definitely on the side of democratic principles and opposed to the Communists. Likewise, every organization and every single individual arrayed against Communism should stand with us—regardless of where they may be. In this crusade, which seeks the perpetuation of all that is worthwhile in civilization, we can find common cause in a plan and program for our own security.

We do not presume to suggest which nations and groups should be invited to join with us and which should not be invited. That should be decided after democratic discussion and democratic majority vote. I am fully persuaded that this can be the beginning of a movement that will have great and perhaps decisive global significance. If all anti-Communist peoples of the world can be brought together in common endeavor, a great step forward will have been taken in the struggle for survival and for a Free World. After you have thoroughly discussed the problems involved, and have agreed upon definite plans for a course of action, I am quite sure that other nations and peoples will become interested, will find out what we are trying to do,

and then will join with us. We hope that in a few months we can have a much larger conference, with far more nations and far more peoples represented. This, as you are all aware, is only a preliminary conference. But that is still another reason for its great importance. What we do here will make possible the growth and the eventual triumph of our cause.

In bidding you a most heartfelt welcome, I want to express my regrets that we lack better quarters for those of you who have come so far because of your interest in fighting Communism. You all understand, I know, that this wartorn country has no really adequate place for a conference such as this. Chinhai happens to be the only possible site available, and even here we have very limited buildings and accommodations. We were forced to limit the number of representatives attending, and even so you are finding that there are certain unavoidable inconveniences and discomforts. I hope that you will not mind too much, and that you will believe me when I say that the hospitality in our hearts far transcends the physical poverty of our stricken land. It is our earnest hope that your love for your country, your people, and for freedom itself is so great that you are willing to sacrifice almost anything to guard and perpetuate them. We are here, after all, not for our own personal pleasure, but to protect all who love liberty against a Communist totalitarianism that is the enemy of all human freedom everywhere.

Some people have quite naturally been anxious to find out whether certain nations were interested in this movement. What we are concerned with, however, is not so much what other countries think of us, but what we—the Asiatic countries and people—think of this movement. If you and I are interested enough in the common cause, and are willing to sacrifice a great deal for it, this small beginning will soon have grown into a great power for good. If that happens, and I am fully confident that it will, we shall find that all the Free Nations will be fully prepared to participate and

to assist us in every way possible. We purposely did not discuss with any of our friendly governments the question of whether or not they are in favor of this undertaking. The reason, as I have said before, is that we have no definite objectives nor plans—nothing that you can put forth as a concrete proposal—until after we agree on something here. I obviously still do not know what this group will do; that is purely up to you to decide.

As a believer in democracy and freedom, I have not been in a position to tell you what you are going to do and what you are not going to do. Instead, I merely say to you that if we stand on principles of right and justice and on the determination to defend the Pacific World and Asia against Communist aggression, we shall not lack for support. I am fully confident that the people and the governments of the United States and all the rest of the Free World will cooperate and will stand beside us in a great crusade to end oppression and bring that better world of tomorrow into existence today. We ask no more—and certainly no less—than that government of the people, by the people, and for the people shall prevail not for just a few, but for every man, woman, and child of this earth. May God guide us wisely in our deliberations and thus speed the certain triumph of brotherhood, of peace, and of freedom.