

August 6, 1953

Summary Memorandum, US-ROK Mutual Defense Treaty (August 6)

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Summary:

In 1953, Secretary Dulles met President Rhee to discuss the US-ROK mutual defense treaty. This summary memorandum notes twelve of Rhee's requests and/or points he will like this treaty to incorporate. These include the number of ROKA divisions, which economic model the US should use to help Korea's economy, and the request for moral and material support for the ROK to resume war with the north. This summary also notes whether the US granted, wanted to further discuss, or rejected each point.

Credits:

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Contents:

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Summary Memorandum

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1. President Rhee asked for a guarantee of "immediate and automatic" military support in case the communists should attack or otherwise break armistice:
Granted:
 1. In July 25 letter from Secretary Dulles
 2. In Joint Declaration by the Sixteen Nations
2. President Rhee asked for a mutual security pact based on the Japanese rather than the Philippine model:
Granted: agreed text ready to be initialled.
- #4 Advantages of this treaty:
 - a. Safeguard for all future against attacks by China, Japan or Russia
 - b. Warning to England not to try to overturn ROKG
 - c. Shows Nehru and all world India has failed to discredit ROK
 - d. Warns Japan not to count on again dominating Korea
 - e. Will help secure Korea-Japan treaty
3. President Rhee asked for build-up of ROKA to ~~20~~ divisions, with air and naval development:
Essentially granted: needs to be clearly specified.
4. President Rhee asked for joint resumption of war by U. S. or for "moral and material support" for ROK to resume war alone if political conference fails:
Postponed: to see what happens in political conference. Although no commitments are made, the evidence is the U. S. is "fed up" with communist tactics and will press for military victory in Korea if the political conference bogs down in communist stalling tactics.
5. President Rhee asked for a centralization of all economic planning and administration in CEB:
Granted in principle: Tasca coming for detailed talks.
6. United States has promised large economic aid to make Korea "showplace of democracy" in the Far East.
7. President Rhee asks the United States to use its influence to prevent U. N. from branding ROK an "aggressor" if it moves unilaterally to liberate north.
Needs to be discussed.
8. President Rhee asks U. S. to join ROK in insisting Korea shall not be "neutralized".
Essentially granted through acceptance of mutual defense treaty.
9. Secretary Dulles and Secretary Stevens came to Korea to demonstrate to all the world that the U. S. considers ROK a valuable Ally and intends despite the views of important Allies to stand by ROK to the finish.
Tremendously important
10. President Rhee asked U. S. to join ROK in walking out of political conference after 90 days if it proves a failure.
Granted.
11. In return, President Rhee agreed to postpone his demand for expulsion of the Chinese Reds, and agreed not to disrupt the armistice.

After all these advantages have been won by ROK, if Secretary Dulles should leave with an announcement that he could not secure a firm agreement or understanding with President Rhee:

- a. ROK will be left alone, without military, diplomatic or economic support, and with its own armies weakened by the last month of communist attacks.
- b. World and U. S. opinion will be shocked and there will certainly be a strong revulsion of feeling against President Rhee and ROK.