

June 14, 1957
**CDS Report No. 43 from Choi Duk Shin to the
President (Syngman Rhee)**

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Summary:

A weekly report from Choi Duk Shin to Syngman Rhee regarding setting up a meeting with the South Vietnamese Foreign Minister, follow-up work of Kolisa-57 Special Mission, and the political situation in Laos.

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CONFIDENTIAL

CDS REPORT NO.43

Excellency,

I have the honour to submit my Weekly Report No.43 as follows:

1. Receipt of Instructions
2. Meeting with Vietnamese Foreign Minister
3. Follow-up Work of Kolisa-57 Special Mission
4. Political Development of Laos

1. Receipt of Instructions.

During the past period I have received Instruction papers Nos. 65,66,67,68 and also a copy of letter No.49 dated 29 May 1957 to Minister Young Kee Lee.

2. Meeting with Vietnamese Foreign Minister.

On 13 June at 1600 hrs I called on Foreign Minister Vu Van Mau. I informed him of my return to Saigon from my home trip to Korea.

I told the Vietnamese Foreign Minister that my Government was very pleased to know of His Excellency, the President of Vietnam's visit to our country. However, I asked him if it would be possible that the date of the proposed visit could be earlier than in November. I stated the reasons that I felt the visit of His Excellency was more than a courtesy, that the meeting of such two great statesmen would produce some form of agreement which will certainly benefit the Free World in the fight against Communism. I stated the second reason, although a minor one, is that the weather in November is the beginning of the winter in Korea.

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The Foreign Minister then assured me that he would take this matter up with his President and then advise me of his President's wishes.

He further advised me that the invitation from the King of Thailand was received last year and although a date has not been arranged, however, it is under discussion.

3. Follow-up of Work of Kolisa-57 Special Mission.

In order to follow up what we gained during our recent goodwill trip to the South and Southeast Asian countries, I feel that I should continue as follows:

- a. Through letter-communications maintain constant contacts with acquainted important figures of the respective countries;
- b. Execute the instructions concerning those countries.

So far I have mailed thank-you letters to the persons in Laos and Cambodia. The thank-you letters to the persons in the other countries visited will be mailed in the next week.

I have already received several letters from Laos and Cambodia. Copies of letters received from the most important figures will be attached to this report for Your Excellency's information. They are from:

- LAOS. (i) Pheng Phongsavan, the President of the National Assembly who has recently been reelected as the President of the National Assembly. I have already sent to him a congratulatory cable;
- (ii) Thao Kan Abhay, the President of the "Conseil du Roi", the eldest statesman in Laos.

CAMBODIA. San Sary, "Haut Conseiller du Roi", who is the right hand man of the Crown Prince Sihanouk.

I was instructed by Foreign Minister to talk with the Thai Ambassador in Saigon on the matter of exchange of diplomatic envoys. On 12 June I called on the Thai Ambassador and discussed this matter. I advised him that I had talked with his Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs concerning this matter while I was in his country. He said he would report the matter to his government immediately and keep in constant touch with me concerning this.

I will report to Your Excellency constantly on the development of the follow-up of my South and Southeast Asian trips.

4. Political Developments of Laos.

There are new developments in the Laotian political circle since the latter part of March when I made a trip to Laos. I reported as follows in "Trip to Laos":

"The foreign diplomatic representatives from U.S.A., Great Britain, Thailand and Vietnam were aware of the danger of communist infiltration and subversion. They are very closely and carefully watching the situation and are making every effort possible to prevent Laos from falling to the Communist camp. The foreign diplomats felt relieved when the National Assembly closed the session with the Pathet Lao problem unsettled. The diplomats said that the unsettlement may prove that the Laotian leaders are awakening."

The recent development gives every indication that it is following the above-mentioned trend. The Prime Minister Prince Sourvamra Phouma went before the National Assembly in an endeavor to outline his efforts to bring the rebellious group - originally formed to fight the French - into a peaceful unified national community when the national assembly convened the last week of May. He accused the rebel Pathet Laos of asking Chinese communist economic aid to Laos as a condition for unification of the country. He further said the country is unwilling to

bind itself on external problems in settling its internal difficulties. However, he told the National Assembly that he intended to continue negotiations with Pathet Laos despite setbacks of the past few months. He asked Parliament to decide whether he followed the right course. On the other hand, the Pathet Lao rebels had promised to put down their arms and to return to the national authorities the two provinces of Sam Nena and of Phongsaly immediately after the formation of a united national government.

Despite the tougher stand of the Prime Minister Prince Souvama Phouma and the false gesture showed by the Pathet Lao rebels, the cabinet of Prince Phouma had to offer its resignation on 30th of May following the many difficulties arising from its negotiations with dissident Pathet Lao. The long-standing negotiations between the Royal Government and the Communist-inclined Pathet Lao were developing a deadlock. Apparently, the National Assembly did not approve of the Prime Minister's policy toward the Communist-inclined Pathet Lao rebels and also did not want him to continue negotiations with rebels.

In the last week the Crown Prince Savang Vathana, acting on behalf of his ailing old father, King of Laos, requested Parliament majority nationalist party leader Katay Don Sasorith to form a new cabinet. The investiture declaration of Premier designate Katay Don Sasorith confirms the intentions of aligning the Kingdom of Laos with all anti-Communist hardshell countries. The Premier designate assesses that during the negotiations one has lost sight of realities which he listed among others, "the Pathet Lao fighting units which were parts of the Communist Viet Minh troops". He further asserted: "Fighting in the Communist Viet Minh ranks and helping the latter attack and invade their

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fatherland, these Laotians have outlawed themselves."

The Premier designate in declaring himself ready to certain concessions means to subordinate the latter to this prime dual conditions: the dissolution of Pathet Lao fighting units and the re-establishment of royal administration in the provinces of Sam Nena and Phongsaly. He also fixes a two-month time limit for the conclusion of the negotiations and thus plans to induce the Pathet Lao to prove its faith in accepting these conditions or to testify that they are the instrument of the international communism in declining them.

The two-week's political crisis has not yet been put to an end. Up to this moment the cabinet is not yet formed. It is difficult to speculate as to how it will come out. However, one thing is certain and that is that the Laotian leaders are awakening.

I am reporting this with much pleasure because the Prime Minister designate, Mr. Katay Don Sasurity, with whom I became acquainted on my last trip to Laos. In my report "Trip to Laos" I said:

"He is a very strong anti-Communist and since his appointment as Deputy Prime Minister he has tried very hard to convince the other members of the cabinet to adopt an anti-Communist policy." (Kolisa 57 Sp Report No. 2 page 11).

With sentiments of deepest loyalty and highest esteem,

Respectfully,

Choi Duk Shin
Choi, Duk Shin

Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary
of Republic of Korea to Vietnam

His Excellency

President of Republic of Korea.

Copies of letters from political leaders
of Laos and Cambodia.

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