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Letter from Pyung Sik Son to the President (Syngman Rhee)

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Summary:

Pyung Sik Son briefly reports on his conversation with Senator Sparkman as well as President Diem's return to South Vietnam.

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Saigon, September 27, 1957

Excellency,

Due to Minister Choi's absence, I have the honour to ask Your Excellency to allow me to submit this brief report on the visit to Korea of the President of the Republic of Vietnam.

As Your Excellency is aware by the news-clippings and excerpts condensed from the press which I had the honour to send to Your Excellency's Office lately, President Ngo-Dinh-Diem's visit to Korea has aroused great enthusiasm among the people here. This visit constitutes the topics of all the local press, broadcasting system and foreign press agencies in Saigon which reserve the headlines of their papers and highlights of their broadcast for commenting on the presidential visit.

Amongst numberless comments, the English language paper "Times of Vietnam" drew up the similarity befalling Korea and Vietnam and entitled its article "Two Countries, One Destiny".

The "Cach Mang Quoc Gia" (National Revolution) outlined the heroic fight of the Korean people to check the Chinese Communist invasion and said that "the Korean and the Vietnamese were exposed to similar desperate situation and only their determination to win brought them that memorable victory".

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The other Vietnamese, French, Chinese languages papers vied among themselves in publishing documentaries on Korea and echoed the hope of the people here for a strengthened friendship and solidarity between the two nations.

In this connection, I wish to quote a remark made by Mr. Sparkman, American Senator, Member of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee, who recently visited Seoul and is now visiting Saigon, when questioned at a press conference about the possibilities of Communist invasions in Korea and Vietnam :

"I certainly hope not. I hope that the Communists will be satisfied to stay where they are".

Senator Sparkman also stated that the positions of the Republic of Korea and the Republic of Vietnam are reinforced by the leadership of Presidents Syngman Rhee and Ngo-Dinh-Diem. He said : "I have great admiration for both, as fine, stronghearted leaders in the cause of freedom".

After taking off from Seoul airport, President Diem arrived at Okinawa Saturday at 3 p.m. for an overnight stopover. He reached Tan Son Nhut airport here on Monday at precisely 8 a.m., safe and in perfect state of health. I was in the official party welcoming his arrival, and judging by his appearance, I thought he was rather satisfied with the accomplished task.

Upon his arrival he expressed his impressions gathered during his visit. He revealed that exceptional

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warm welcome was extended to him by Your Excellency, the Government and the people of Korea, and he considers this warm welcome as "a sign of friendship and mutual esteem given not barely to him but to the whole Vietnamese people". He said he noticed in the places which he visited the noble qualities of the Korean people and the unshakable faith of the Korean youth in the future of their fatherland. He also expressed his admiration for Korea's great power in the economic and industrial rehabilitation. Finally, President Diem concluded by saying that with these national qualities and Your Excellency's great leadership, there is great hope for Korea to achieve its final victory in the materialization of unity in freedom.

I have the honour to be,
with the deepest loyalty,
Your Excellency's obedient

Servant,



Pyung Sik Son
First Secretary
Korean Legation in Saigon

His Excellency

President of Republic of Korea

- Enclosures : 1. President Ngo Dinh Diem's visit to Korea - Condensed from foreign press agencies - N° 2.
2. News-Clipping on President Ngo Dinh Diem's visit to Korea - N° 2.