

**November 8, 1956**  
**CDS Report No. 23 from Choi Duk Shin to the  
President (Syngman Rhee)**

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**Summary:**

Choi Duk Shin reports on the delivery of President Rhee's letter to President Diem, Vietnam-Taiwan relations on the topic of Chinese minorities living in Vietnam, and recent South Vietnam affairs including an exhibit displaying proofs of Communist Viet Minh activities.

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November 8, 1956

CONFIDENTIAL.

CDS REPORT NO. 023

Excellency,

I have the honour to submit my Weekly Report No. 023 covering the following points:

1. Receipt of Instructions
2. Transmittal of Your Excellency's Private Letter to the President of Vietnam
3. Vietnam-China Relationship
4. Colonel Kim leaves for home
5. Vietnam Affairs
6. Social Activities

1. Receipt of Instructions.

It is with deep appreciation that I acknowledge receipt of Your Excellency's Instruction No. 25 in the last pouch.

2. Transmittal of Your Excellency's Private Letter to the President of Vietnam.

On Monday, November 5, 1956, at eleven a.m., I again had the honour to deliver in person Your Excellency's personal letter to the President, Mr. Ngo Dinh Diem. He again received me in his working room.

Firstly, I advised him that I was delivering to His Excellency a personal letter from the President of the Republic of Korea. Upon handing the letter to him he immediately opened the letter and read it through. He expressed his gratitude by repeating the following words of Your Excellency: "I am impressed also on my meeting with the Viet-Nam delegation to the Youth Conference in Seoul, who are alert to the Communist menace and aware of their youthful responsibilities in safeguarding freedom."

-2-

During tea and conversation, I did not forget to express Your Excellency's sincere appreciation for all the good work the Vietnamese people have been doing to assist and aid the flood victims of our country as directed by Your Excellency in Instruction No. 23. Our conversation then turned to the two crises facing the world at the present time. Namely, the heroic struggle that Hungary is making against Russia and the Middle East crisis. It seemed that he was shocked when he had learned that same morning that the Russian Armed Forces had attacked and seized the capital building and all the Cabinet Members of Nagy's Government had been arrested by the Russians. As far as the Middle East crisis is concerned, he expressed the regret that Egypt's President Nassar, had gone too far in too short a time. I believe that in making this expression he desired to indicate to me that he was proud of the manner in which he had dealt with France, their former colonial ruler. The audience lasted about 20 minutes.

The Government of His Excellency has issued a statement in which is expressed their opinions toward the Hungarian Revolution against Communism and the crisis in the Middle East. I attach this in the newsclipping for Your Excellency's information.

Also enclosed is one of the resolutions of the Vietnam People's Movement in newspaper form to show how the Vietnamese people are sharing the gallant and heroic spirit of the Hungarian people in their struggle for independence and freedom.

3. Vietnam-China Relationship.

This Legation received from the Chinese Legation in Saigon a mimeographed copy of the statement of Free China's Government

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-3-

dated 17 October 1956 concerning the decree of Vietnamese citizenship for all Chinese Nationals born in Vietnam. This statement started with:

"It is most regrettable that the Vietnamese Government should continue to hold the view that the conferment by decree of Vietnamese citizenship on all Chinese nationals born in Vietnam regardless of the time of their birth is solely within its domestic jurisdiction and that the enforcement of this decree according to the rules of International Law should not be a matter of diplomatic negotiation between the two governments."

It then pointed out in the following paragraphs, the legal ground of the Chinese Government and concluded their statement by saying:

"It is therefore difficult to resist the conclusion that the legal ground on which the Vietnamese Government seeks to justify its unilateral position is a tenuous one and can be conclusively refuted by a cursory reference to the general principles of International Law or municipal law on nationality.

"In view of their juridical considerations and the historical bonds of friendship between the two peoples, we earnestly hope that the Vietnamese Government would see its way to change its seemingly inflexible attitude in this matter."

I attach the whole text of this statement in the newsclipping for Your Excellency's information.

It has been reported that the Vietnamese Minister to Nationalist China will go to Taiwan to open his Legation late in November and the newly appointed Chinese diplomatic representative will come to Vietnam

-4-

pretty soon, however, there are still no signs of improvement of the relationship between Free Vietnam and Free China. The following three main problems are still unresolved:

- 1) Vietnamese citizenship for all Chinese Nationals born in Vietnam;
- 2) Professions forbidden to foreigners (mainly pertaining to Overseas Chinese);
- 3) Chinese Middle Schools are not allowed to open.

4. Colonel Kim leaves for Home.

Colonel Kim Tai-Kue, the assistant to General Chung on his recent visit to Vietnam, and who was left behind to inspect several more military installations, has accomplished his mission in Vietnam and will leave for home tomorrow, November 9.

He has visited so far the Military Academy, the Training Center, the Naval Base, the Pilot Training School and the Staff College. He has also given lecturelike talks to fellow officers and men of the Vietnamese Armed Forces.

He has been received by them courteously and the talks which he gave were especially welcomed by them because of his knowledge and experiences in the fighting of Communists which are so valuable.

At the end of Colonel Kim's tour in Vietnam, General Williams the Chief of the U.S. Military Mission (MAAG), invited Colonel Kim to his office and asked of him his impressions and also some suggestions on the Vietnamese Armed Forces. Colonel Kim made several good suggestions which will certainly serve to assist the leaders of the Vietnamese Armed Forces to improve their fighting ability.

110

-5-

5. Vietnam Affairs.

a. Four Secretaries of State Resign.

A news bulletin reports the resignations of the four Secretaries of State as follows:

"On the morning of November 5, as the functions of the Constituent Assembly expired, the following Deputies submitted their resignations as Secretaries of State, to the President of the Republic:

Nguyen Huu Chau	- Secretary of State to the Presidency and for the Interior
Vu Quoc Thong	- Secretary of State for Public Health and Social Welfare
Tran Chanh Thanh	- Secretary of State for Information and Youth
Tran Trung Dung	- Assistant Secretary for the National Defense

"In the Cabinet meeting, held that same day in the afternoon, the President accepted their resignations and asked the above mentioned Secretaries of State to continue their functions until other Secretaries of State are appointed".

b. Transition of Constituent Assembly into Legislative Assembly.

The function of the Constituent Assembly ended on November 5, after the Assembly held its final meeting before becoming the Legislative Assembly. On November 9, 1956, in the early morning, the installation ceremony of the First Legislative Assembly of the Republic of Vietnam will be held to mark its change.

The President of the Republic of Vietnam and all foreign diplomats are invited to observe this ceremony. The President will deliver a message.

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-6-

c. Exhibition of Proofs of Communist Viet Minh Subversive Activities.

An exhibition of concrete proofs of the Communist Viet Minh subversive activities in Free Vietnam has been organized and is on display at the Information Hall of Saigon Prefecture.

The exhibition includes three parts:

- 1) Concrete proofs of the violations by the Communist Viet Minh of the clauses of the Geneva Agreements;
- 2) Weapons seized and pictures of arms caches of the Communist Viet Minh in different localities evacuated by them;
- 3) Documents on Communist Viet Minh subversive activities from 1954 to 1956.

The main aim of this exhibition is to promote a judicious and realistic opinion among a certain number of Nationalists who have and are being fooled by the Communist Viet Minh deceitful propaganda and make them understand that the Government of Free Vietnam, though it did not sign the Agreements, always respects them, while the Viet Minh have committed many violations toward these very agreements.

The exhibition gave visitors an opportunity to see the weapons the USSR and Communist China have supplied to the Vietcong; the documents signed and sealed by the rebels. These documents have been translated into Vietnamese, French and English.

This exhibition has been keenly praised by foreign circles.

-7-

d. Bad Reputations on Red China's Trade to Southeast Asia.

The Vietnamese press has put out a news dispatch from a newspaper called Straits Times of Singapore as documentation in its November 7 issue as follows:

"Expectations of large rubber orders from Communist China for Singapore and Malay traders have been disappointed, said the STRAITS TIMES on September 11. Instead of the expected order for about 30,000 tons, they have learned that China will buy only 2,000 tons from Singapore and 1,000 from the Malay Federation -- the whole amount being less than the rubber bought by Japan for July alone.

"The reactions of overseas Chinese and other Asian consumers to goods received from Communist China are also said to be unfavourable. While initial orders are fulfilled with goods of the specified standard, subsequent deliveries do not reach this standard.

"Malay traders complain that Chinese cloth gets narrower and poorer in quality with each successive shipment; the low quality cement is not worth buying; bicycles and sewing machines are below Western standards, and dealers have to reduce prices below cost to get rid of them.

"The general effect of these Chinese exports is to make traders extremely careful in making their purchases."

This indicates that the purpose of trade by the Communists is merely for their subversive activities, not really for trade.

6. Social Activities.

a. November 2nd. On this evening I gave a dinner in honour of the Thailand Ambassador and Mrs. Pramote Chongchareon. From the American Embassy I invited the Counselor of Embassy and Mrs. Anderson, and from the British, the then Charge d'Affaires and Mrs. Etherington-Smith.

The purpose of the dinner was to reciprocate the dinner the Ambassador and Mrs. Chongchareon had given in my honour and Mrs. Choi's.

113



-8-

November 5th. At 9 o'clock I called on Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Tho, the Secretary of State for National Economy. He is the man who is supposed to be nominated as Vice-President.

We talked generally on the possibility of trade between our two countries. He hopes that the samples of goods made in the Republic of Korea will be made available to him in order that he may evaluate the possibility of buying from us.

At 11.00 o'clock I was received by the President, as reported in Item 2.

At 18.30 the British Charge d'Affaires and Mrs. Etherington-Smith invited Mrs. Choi and I to a reception in honour of the return to Vietnam of the British Ambassador and Lady Stephenson.

Ambassador and Lady Stephenson have had a vacation of about six months and during this trip to their home country the British Queen honoured Mr. Stephenson as a Knight and Mrs. Stephenson received the title of 'Lady'.

Sir Hugh will resume the status of Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, the Japanese Ambassador having acted as Dean during Sir Hugh's absence in England.

On the same evening the President invited all Cabinet Members and all heads of the Diplomatic Corps to a movie in the Palace.

With sentiments of deepest loyalty and highest esteem.

Respectfully,



Choi, Duk Shin

Minister of Korea to Republic of Vietnam

His Excellency  
President of the Republic of Korea.

114

-9-

- Attachments:**
1. Newsclipping
  2. The Times of Vietnam

115