

November 29, 1957
**CDS Report No. 65 from Choi Duk Shin to the
President (Syngman Rhee)**

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Summary:

Choi Duk Shin reports on Japanese Premier Kishi's travels in Southeast Asia, the current situations in Thailand and Laos, and Malaya's fright against communism.

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CONFIDENTIAL

CDS REPORT NO. 065

Excellency,

I have the honour to submit this Weekly Report which is covering the following subjects:

1. Receipt of Instructions
2. Japanese Premier Kishi's Trip in Southeast Asia
3. Situations in Thailand and Laos
4. Major Events in Vietnam and Malaya
5. Social Activities.

1. Receipt of Instructions

In last week's pouch, I have received Your Excellency's instructions No. 98 and No. 99 dated November 20 and November 21 respectively, together with Your Excellency's 3 Notes of policy statements. At the same time, I have received from Your Excellency's Office some informational data on Ryukyu problem and the text of address by General Lemnitzer and a few excerpts of Japanese newspapers. I am most appreciative of Your Excellency's kindness and generosity in sending those materials to me.

The policy statements which Your Excellency made clear once again on Nation's foreign policy were carefully read by me, and I assure Your Excellency that those will be the guiding principles in functioning of my official duty in the future.

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2. Japanese Premier Kishi's Trip to Southeast Asia

As for his continuity of the current Southeast Asian trip, he went to Cambodia, Laos, Malaya, Singapore and Indonesia. At the moment I write this report, he is probably on the way from Indonesia to Australia.

I am following up his trip, collecting all the data I can get here in Saigon, which I attached to this Report for Your Excellency's reference.

In my observation so far, his trip to the above mentioned countries is seemingly successful, in comparison with that of Vietnam. From the news dispatches, we found that he has succeeded in persuading the Governments of the above visited countries to declare jointly to ban the nuclear test which did not appear in the joint statement made in Vietnam.

3. Situation in Laos and Thailand

a. Laos

As Your Excellency might already pay attention to recent developments which I have reported in the Report No. 064, In a gathering, I had an opportunity to have a conversation with the Australian Envoy to Vietnam and concurrently to Laos. The Australian Envoy made frequent visits to Laos and the last trip he made there was just after the recent reorganization of the Laotian Government with two members of Pathet Lao (Communist Laos) in the Cabinet.



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The following is the gist of his talk on the situation in Laos.

According to the Australian Envoy, he had the opportunity to talk with the Prime Minister of Laos, whose younger brother is the leader of Pathet Lao (Red Laos). The Prime Minister told the Australian diplomat that his brother never could be a Communist, expressing very optimistic views on the recent situation in Laos. The Prime Minister further told him that he is so sure that his brother's Pathet Lao Party will follow up the policy and Constitution of the Kingdom of Laos, and when they fail to obey and keep the promise which they made with him, he will use the military power to crash them. To the Australian Envoy's asking of why the Royal Government does not use the military might at present to destroy the Communist elements, the Laotian leader replied that the public opinion is against the fighting. But when the Reds fails to keep their words, and then the Royal Laos uses the power, the people will support him.

One more point which must be mentioned in relating to situation in Laos is about Mr. Kathy, who is the strongest anti-communist leader in that country. Most regrettably, he is very sick now. I think that Mr. Kathy's sickness may have affected somehow the recent change in the situation in Laos.

The said Australian diplomat expressed his dim hope for the outcome of situation in Laos in favor of the Free World. This expression, I believe, is also the one

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adopted by envoys from other western powers in Laos.

The tremendous influence of India in this area is increasingly prevailing in relation with the situation of Laos. Frankly, India's influence has made some successful task in Laos for bringing about neutral or Communist elements into power, and next target of India's advance will be naturally Vietnam in views that the Republic of Vietnam is the only country which still stands against "neutralism."

Also the diplomatic failure of Western powers, especially of America and Britain, is becoming clearer in this area.

Recent political confusion in Thailand has greatly affected the reworsening of situation in Laos, since the two countries are tightly connected to each other geographically, culturally and economically, namely the two are of the same race, using the same language.

On the other hands, the tactical shift of the Communists is being made on the line of "peace" and "coexistence". As they know that military aggression will not bring any fruit in achieving their aim for world conquest, they are trying to yield to India's idea for gradual expansion under the disguise of "peaceful coexistence." Furthermore the Communists are aware that many people are declined to anti-war sentiments.

It is most regrettable to report that the situation in Laos is going to be bad to worse, but I am still hoping that the Western Powers will take effective

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and prompt actions for betterment of the situation in this area before it will completely enter into the Red orbits.

b. Thailand

American Ambassador Bishop to Bangkok came to Saigon this week for his private trip. I have been keeping contact with him since I made a visit to Thailand in last May.

He told me that he is pessimistic over the situation in Thailand, because it is hard to find a new leader for that country after the ousting of strong man Pibul Songram from the power. He said there still is possibility that Songram may return to power in the future.

He said that Marshall Sarit, who led the coup d'etat in Thailand, is a professional soldier and naturally lacks of political knowledge. Marshall Sarit is pro-West and anti-Communist, however, curiously, the newspapers which he owns are in most cases publishing left-winger editorials. At this point, Ambassador Bishop also disclosed a private secret of Marshall Sarit by telling that the medical doctor said that Marshall Sarit can hardly live one more year because of his sickness.

Asked why former Premier Pibul escaped from his country instead of staying and trying to deter the coup-d'etat, the American Ambassador's answer was :

"Pibul is a dedicated Buddhist and he loves peace. He knew that his further stay in the country might bring bloody fighting. You know, Thailand has now big guns, not merely pistols. The big guns will kill many people

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if they fired. The people do not like to have any more fight which Mr. Pibul knew so well."

According to this U.S. Ambassador, it seemed to me that the ousted Premier is still in the mind of U.S. Government.

Meanwhile, another foreigner, who is more closer to public opinion of Thailand, said that there is great possibility of increasing advance of left-wingers and Communists in the forthcoming general elections slated for December 15. He said that if you ask the man in the street, he will tell you almost the same opinion.

The same foreigner further told me that the present Premier ad intérim could hardly become Premier after the élections. He has another job waiting for him.

He also said that the former Police Chief and Home Minister Nai Pao has left. It will be next to impossible to let him come back into the Thai political scene.

When somebody asked this foreigner to illustrate a little more on the recent coup d'etat, his story was:

"The Chief of Police forces had a plan and in fact was mobilizing the forces to coup the Army. He told his plan to PIBUL. Most unfortunately for the Chief of Police was that PIBUL did warn Marshall Sarit on this plan of police coup. Naturally the Army had to hurry in mobilizing its forces and took the initiative to coup the Police first."

According to his story, the Army did intentionally let former Premier Pibul get out of the country freely,

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and Marshall Sarit still says that he respects Pibul and recognizes his merits toward the country. However, the Army was deciding to catch the Chief of Police, General Nai Pao. But General Nai Pao was driving to the airport under heavy guards as soon as he heard the coup of the Army has been started.

The ousted Police boss had obtained the visa for Switzerland prior to this coup. His preparation for escape has surprised many people in Thailand. Moreover, the Army would like to have a "bloodless coup", so the soldiers did not try to fight to stop General Nai Pao's escape.

I have no way to find out how far this story could be true. But I tried to illustrate this story so as this particular foreigner has told.

Since the development of situation in Thailand will affect tremendously the situation of the world in general, of Southeast Asia in particular, I would like to report from time to time to Your Excellency on the matter.

4. Major Events in Vietnam and Malaya

a. USS Rochester, the flagship of US Seventh Fleet, visits Saigon.

Vice Admiral Wallace M. Beakley, Commander of the Seventh Fleet, arrived in Saigon on board of his flagship Rochester on November 25, and left early morning on November 28. The visiting U.S. Vice-Admiral and his staffs engaged in a very heavy schedule. They called on the

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President and many other Vietnamese officials. On board of their ship, they also were honoured by a visit of the President of Vietnam and other high ranking officials as well as the diplomats. I noticed, when driving near to the ship that the ribbon of Your Excellency's unit citation was proudly stored at a high place in the ship. This ship earned its unit citation during the war in our country.

b. Vietnam appointed Consul-General to Burma.

The Vietnam Press reported on November 27 that the Vietnam Government has decided to establish a consulate general in Rangoon, Burma. Mr. Iran Van Dinh, who served as Assistant Secretary General to the Colombo Plan Conference, has been appointed Consul General to Rangoon.

c. Lt. General Wheeler, Chief of the U.N. mission for the Development of the Lower Mekong River basin, visits Vietnam.

It was reported that General Wheeler is now on tour of survey of the lower Mekong River basin. He said to the press in Bangkok that the projects related to this region concern navigation, irrigation, water control and power development.

The General made it known that one-month long inspection work will be started in the near future, and that he will report back to the U.N. after conducting negotiations with the interested countries on the financing process. He arrived in Saigon on November 28 for discussion with the Vietnamese officials. The aides to General Wheeler's

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mission include engineers from U.S., Canada , China, France and Japan.

d. Malaya will recognize Red China if

There is a report from the United Press in Singapore, as follows :

"Singapore - Nov. 23 (UP)

Malaya will recognize Communist China if the Malayan Communist Party surrenders unconditionally at the forthcoming peace talks, sources close the Malayan Prime Minister Tengku Abdul Rahman told this correspondent during his brief stopover in Singapore Thursday.

Malayan Communist boss Chin Peng had recently written a letter to Rahman requesting a meeting to seek a 'fair and just agreement to end the nine and a half year old guerilla war.'

Their first meeting at Baling in North Malaya in December, 1955, ended in failure when Rahman resolutely rejected Chin Peng's demand for recognition of the Malayan Communist Party among other conditions.

Soon after independence, the Malayan Government offered more liberal surrender terms in a bid to get Chin Peng and his 1,800 comrades to come out of the jungle.

These terms include no prosecution for crimes committed "under the direction of the Communists," repatriation to China for all those who wish to leave the country together with their families and a gratuit payment of 100 Malayan dollars (about \$30) a month for a year to help them start their lives in China.

There is no mention of police surveillance over those who choose to stay in Malaya but sources here said the Government would even relax this if Chin Peng and his comrades would agree to dissolve the Malayan Communist Party.

Malaya's Prime Minister Tengku Abdul Rahman has on numerous occasions made it abundantly clear that he believed Peiping was directing the guerillas in Malaya.

He had turned down several applications by individuals and organizations to visit Red China.

In one of these he chided a trade union organization and reminded it that Malaya was fighting a war against Communism.

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Sources close to the Prime Minister said Rahman realized that he and his Government would have to fight communist subversion even if the Malayan Communist Party were to lay down its arms.

He was heard on numerous occasions to have expressed concern on the Communist subversion against newly independent Southeast Asian countries especially those who are Malaya's neighbors. In one public statement he was quoted as having said that democracy and Communism could not coexist.

Sources said Rahman is fully aware that what can happen to Indonesia 'can happen to Malaya'.

We recall that when Malaya obtained her independence on August 31, many countries have recognized her, including our country, the Republic of Vietnam, West Germany and also Nationalist China. However, the Malayan Government accepted all but from Nationalist China, because Red China also made ^{announcement} from Peiping saying that Peiping was recognizing Malaya. Then the Government of Malaya had refrained from acceptance of the recognitions from both sides.

Now it makes clear to the world that the reason of non acceptance of recognition from Nationalist China and Red China is to make bargain with the Communists in the settlement of internal problems in Malaya.

The most prompt and wise measures taken by Your Excellency on the recognition of Malaya and several dispatches of special missions to that country made it sure that Malaya never even imagine the matter of recognition of north Korean puppet regime.

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5. Social Activities

a. On November 25, Monday, the U.S. Ambassador invited me to a black-tie dinner in honour of Vice Admiral Beakley, Commander of Seventh Fleet. At the party, I also met American Ambassador to Thailand Bishop.

b. On November 26, Tuesday, the Vietnamese Navy Commander invited Mrs. Choi and me to a reception in honour of Vice-Admiral Beakley.

c. On November 27, Wednesday, Vice-Admiral Beakley and his staffs invited Mrs. Choi and me to a reception on board of their flagship Rochester.

d. On November 29, Friday, French Ambassador and his wife invited Mrs. Choi and me to a Red Cross Kermesse. We donated to this organization.

e. On November 29, Friday, in the evening, our Fisheries Market Research delegation, composed of nine men, arrived in Saigon for a 3-day visit.

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As for my recommendation of awarding the decorations to Foreign Minister Vu Van Mau of Vietnam and General Le Van Ty, Chief of General Staff, Armed Forces of Vietnam, I was informed by our Foreign Minister that the Government has in principle agreed to grant them the Nation's decoration. In a separate report to the Foreign Minister, Dr. Cho, I have made drafts for the citation as the Foreign Minister directed me to do so.

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May I ask Your Excellency to grant the above mentioned decorations to those prominent leaders in

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diplomatic and military fields of the Republic of
Vietnam.

With sentiments of deepest loyalty
and highest esteem,

Respectfully,

Choi Duk Shin
Choi Duk Shin

Minister to Vietnam

His Excellency
The President

Attachment.- Data on Japanese Prime Minister Kishi's
Trip to Southeast Asia.

Copy to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

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