

October 25, 1957
**CDS Report No. 60 from Choi Duk Shin to the
President (Syngman Rhee)**

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Summary:

Choi Duk Shin offers an update on the Colombo Plan Conferences, the attitudes of regional countries, and reports on the bombing incidents in Saigon.

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CONFIDENTIAL

CDS REPORT NO. 060

Excellency,

I have the honour to submit this Weekly Report No. 060 which is covering the following subjects:

1. Receipt of Instructions
2. Colombo Plan Conference
3. Major Events of the Week in Vietnam
4. Social Activities

1. Receipt of Instructions

In the last week's pouch, I received Your Excellency's instruction No. 94 dated October 18, 1957 together with a copy of the cable sent to Ambassador Yang, instructions from Your Excellency's Office and the Foreign Minister on our stands regarding Ryukyu problem, and two informational data on Japan.

I am deeply appreciative for Your Excellency's generosity and kindness in sending those materials to me.

2. Colombo Plan Conference

My official functions as the Envoy to Vietnam was naturally limited in dealing with this matter. Although I have been in touch with members of delegations to Colombo Plan Conference through social activities, officially I could only contacted with the Vietnamese Government authorities for this matter.

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At this moment, I received no official reply on this question from the Vietnamese Foreign Minister who has been the chairman of the Ministerial Meeting of Colombo Plan. It seems to me that the efforts on the part of Vietnam are fruitless. In my frank observation, this matter could not help but closing with no result for this time.

I wish to make my personal observation on the attitudes of some countries on this matter.

Philippines: When I have had an opportunity to see the Philippines Chief Delegate, Mr. Paulino J. Garcia, Minister of Public Health, he told me that he was instructed by his Government to support our membership. It is quite apparent that the Philippines Government was ready to endorse positively our membership in Colombo Plan.

United States: To my greatest surprise, the attitude of the United States toward this matter was virtually cool. I wish to point out that the U.S. Chief Delegate, Mr. Reinhardt, Counsellor of the State Department and former Ambassador to Vietnam, has never touched on this problem at all, although I have met him at several occasions.

Britain: Although British attitude, as it was revealed by Ambassador Evans in Seoul, was not to oppose our membership, it was apparent that she was not ready at least to take positive action in persuading other countries to agree with our admission into Colombo Plan. In other words, her move was actually reluctant. In my observation, the Chief Delegate of Britain to the Ministerial Meeting, Lord Reading, former Foreign Secretary, was not instructed by his Government on this matter at all. Furthermore, the advice made by the British Ambassador to Vietnam appeared to have

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effectively influenced over the Vietnamese officials who had attempted to bring our membership up to the Conference.

As I have previously reported, Britain is the originator of the Plan, thus the most powerful and influential member state in this Organization. To our great regret, it became clear that British Ambassador Evans has failed in extending influence to his Government in urging to take positive action.

Thailand: The Thai Ambassador was a member of the delegation to the Colombo Plan meeting and further has been maintaining particular personal relations with me. In spite of these facts, he did not relate to me about this matter. It implies naturally that the Ambassador received no instruction from his home Government.

Ceylon: I have also sent the letter to the Finance Minister of Ceylon, who had attended the International Bank meeting in Washington. But most unfortunately, he did not come to Saigon as Chief Delegate as it was expected. Instead, Ceylon has dispatched the Parliamentary Minister to Colombo Plan Conference, who was on trip to Soviet Russia when I visited Ceylon last April.

It is most regrettable that this question must be closed in this way, despite the efforts of our Foreign Minister and Ambassador Yang.

As Your Excellency might well know, influence of Vietnam is not so strong, and in my judgement, British attitude has brought about such a result that our membership in Colombo Plan has failed this year.

It is reported that the next meeting of Colombo Plan will be held in Washington. And I am hopeful that the

United States, as the host country, will devote her efforts to invite our country to the meeting.

As for the category of "receiver" and "donor", it is not necessary to stick fast for the conceptions, since we can enjoy the position as "the donor" for some other under-developed countries in Southeast Asia in accordance with our own capability. Moreover, it will be good chance for us to demonstrate our industry to those countries which are in need of our help and assistance in some ways. Practically, our country will be able to be "the donor" in comparison with other member states of Colombo Plan.)

I wish to attach all the data concerning the Ministerial Meeting of Colombo Plan Conference to this Report for Your Excellency's reference.

3. Major Events of the Week in Vietnam

a. Bombing Incidents in Saigon

Three explosions within two days took place in Saigon this week. First one hidden under a flower pot in a hotel where American Military personnel were lodged was exploded on October 22 and six American officers and a Vietnamese were wounded. A short time after, another explosion took place in a bus carrying American officers to their offices. Seven American military personnel and a child who stood nearby were injured. The third explosion was happened in the reading room of USIS library on October 23, luncheon time, but nobody was injured.

The Vietnamese Government and the U.S. State Department immediately released the statements declaring that the bombings were not a manifestation of anti-Americanism and they are works of Communist agents.

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I attach all the data on this incident to this Report.

Despite tight security control was imposed for the Meeting of Colombo Plan Conference and for National Day, a series of explosions were occurred in the capital of Vietnam. Furthermore, the Vietnamese authorities have failed in its preventive measures against possible incidents and in arresting criminals and suspects in the case up till now.

I am not completely in accord with some parts of official statements by both Vietnam and the United States which stressed that the incidents were only the work of Communist agents.

b. Meeting with the Spanish Minister

Spanish Minister to Thailand Fernando Vasquez Mendez who is concurrently accredited to Vietnam and Cambodia has called on me on October 23. He came to Saigon for attending the Vietnamese National Day. I made return call on him later.

I wish to report to Your Excellency the gist of our conversations during which I think he made some important remarks on our national unification.

The Minister, who is really proud of his own anti-Communist records since Spanish Civil War, said that Spain is the first country which opposed so strongly to Communism and that her firm stands has never been wavered despite misunderstanding of the U.S. and Britain which blamed her of Fascism.

The Spanish Minister expressed his profound respect to Your Excellency when he saw the portrait.

He disclosed his idea on our national unification as follows:

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"At the present international climate in which Afro-Asian bloc has been increasing its influence for the admission of Red China into the United Nations, the question of Korean unification should be inevitably connected with that of Communist China. If Red China should be admitted into the U.N., there must be, first of all, retraction of condemnation of Chinese regime as aggressor. He said that the U.N. can seek Korean unification at the price of Red China's seat in the world organization."

Of course I made no reference to his remarks, but expressing my thanks for his interests on our problem.

He added that his country has been maintaining friendly relations with Free China and never want downfall of Free China in case Red China be admitted into the U.N. However, he continued, the present international trend seems failed to find the ways and means to eliminate Red China and that Korean problem must be considered from broader angles of observation.

He touched with the topic on the United States aids to Korea by saying that American help are properly and effectively used for reconstruction.

He further showed a very friendly manner by saying, "If you come to Bangkok some day, please stay with me. I have a nice house and I am a bachelor. I have always two rooms reserved for guests."

c. Press Report on Your Excellency's Visit to Vietnam

On October 20, Vietnamese language daily "TU DO" and three others in Saigon reported as follows:

"In view of strengthening the anti-Communist

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forces between the two Vietnamese and Korean peoples, the President of Vietnam has just completed a visit to Seoul last month.

"It is learned that President Syngman Rhee has decided to visit Vietnam toward the end of the year, from December 15 to 25, 1957. The President will be accompanied in this visit by the Korean Foreign Affairs and Defense Ministers."

When I returned from Seoul, I was interviewed by a reporter of Vietnam Press, who asked me about whether Your Excellency will visit Vietnam, and if so when. I merely replied that it contains big possibility but I do not know when. I do not think my remarks have brought about this sort of speculations among the Vietnamese press.

I think that the motive of such a report is an expression of anxiety of Vietnamese people who are so eager to see that Your Excellency's visit be materialized.

Under the circumstances that many press reporters come to this Legation to inquire exact information, I wish to be permitted to have Your Excellency's instruction on this matter.

d. Cultural Exhibition

The Cultural Exhibition was opened on October 23 while the President of Vietnam, many Government officials and diplomatic corps were present. The United States and Indonesia have joined Vietnam in this Exhibition.

e. Vietnam's Desire to Seat in the FAO Council

The Vietnam Government sent a note asking our support in the efforts for a seat at the FAO Council. I attach the copy of the note and letter to the Foreign Minister to this Report.

4. Social Activities

a. On October 19, Saturday, I received the visit of the Chinese Minister to Vietnam.

b. On October 20, Sunday, Mrs. Choi and I attended a reception given by the Australian Minister.

c. On October 21, Monday, at 1030 hours, I attended the Inaugural Ceremony of the Ministerial Meeting of Colombo Plan Conference.

d. At the same evening, Mrs. Choi and I attended a reception given by the Thai Ambassador.

e. On October 22, Tuesday, I made a return call to the Chinese Minister.

f. At the same evening, I attended the reception by the Philippines Minister.

g. On October 23, Wednesday, at 1000 hours, I attended the Opening ceremony of the Cultural Exhibition Fair which was presided over by the President of Vietnam.

h. At noon, I attended the Rotary Club luncheon honoring the Chief Delegates to Colombo Plan Conference.

i. On October 24, Thursday, in the afternoon, I made a return call to the Spanish Minister.

j. On October 25, Friday, in the evening, Mrs. Choi and I attended the reception by Mayor of Saigon.

With sentiments of deepest loyalty and
highest esteem,

Respectfully,

Choi Duk Shin

Choi Duk Shin
Minister to Vietnam

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His Excellency

President of Republic of Korea

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- Attachments: 1. Data on Ministerial Meeting of Colombo Plan Conference
2. Data on Bombing Incidents in Saigon
3. Copy on Vietnam's Request for Support of Korea in seeking Seat at FAO Council

Copy: Minister of Foreign Affairs.

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