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Letter, Syngman Rhee to Young Kee Kim

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Summary:

President Rhee asks Minister Kim to discuss Korea's admission to SEATO with other representatives from France, Philippines, and Thailand.

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28 March 1956

To Minister Young Kee Kim, Manila

From the President

I wish to thank you for your Report No. 77, together with enclosures.

I am pleased to know that Senator Delgado has suggested Korea be given membership in the SEATO and that the French would favorably support such membership. When you next see the French Ambassador please inform him that you reported his comments to me and I appreciate very much the stand which his Government would take in this connection. We were rather surprised to receive a report recently that Vice President Garcia had proposed the admission of Japan to the SEATO but did not mention Korea. Later the Thailander, Prince Wan made the same proposal. If you have an opportunity I wish you would enquire whether this report is correct.

Whenever you speak to Philippine officials and representatives in the Philippines who are friendly to Korea, you should bring up the subject of the United States, who is coming out in full force to bolster Japan for admittance to the United Nations, but gives no support to Korea. I do not have to give you the background why Korea should be admitted, even before Japan is considered. To withhold support because Korea is divided is very unreasonable, because it was the United Nations who declared this Government the only legal Government of Korea. Also to compare the division of Korea with that of Vietnam does not hold. The division of Korea was effected originally by Franklin D. Roosevelt and our people later fought in defence of its independence against the Communists.