



July 11, 1957
CDS Report No. 47 from Choi Duk Shin to the President
(Syngman Rhee)

Citation:

“CDS Report No. 47 from Choi Duk Shin to the President (Syngman Rhee),” July 11, 1957, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, B-331-045, The Korean Legation in Vietnam, Reports from the Korean Mission to the United Nations and Republic of Korea Embassies and Legations, Syngman Rhee Institute, Yonsei University.

<http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/120952>

Summary:

Choi Duk Shin reports on his discussions with foreign ambassadors, South Vietnamese reaction to the Anti-American Riot in Formosa (Taiwan), U.S. political and economic engagement of Japan, and news on the political crises in Laos and Cambodia.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from the Syngman Rhee Institute, Yonsei University.

Original Language:

English

Contents:

- Scan of Original Document



July 11, 1957

CONFIDENTIAL

CDS REPORT NO. 047

Excellency,

I have the honour to submit my Weekly Report No.047 as follows:

1. Vietnamese Observance of the "Double Seven" Day
 2. Meetings with Dignitaries
 3. Vietnamese Interpretation of the anti-American Riot in Formosa
 4. Vietnam Affairs
 5. News from Laos and Cambodia
 6. Social Activities
1. Vietnamese Observance of the "Double Seven" Day.

On July 7th the Vietnamese people celebrated wholeheartedly the 3rd Anniversary of the coming to power of President Ngo Dinh Diem. I was among the diplomats who attended a very high inauguration ceremony of the general exhibition of the achievements of the Government and I then reviewed the exhibition stands.

At 1100 hours, after the ceremony, I proceeded to Independence Palace to sign the Golden Book.

The "Double Seven" Day observed by the Vietnamese was a colorful, but not a luxurious one. It is reported that the President had instructed that the celebrations be as simple as possible and that they were to be kept within a cost limit.

In his message to his compatriots the President declared:
"The first year has been devoted to the recovery of our political independence, and the second year to the consolidation of our democratic structure, the third year to the building of new foundations for our economy.

The government has brought forward many renovation methods in industrial production fields, in a strong effort to Vietnamise the national economy and at the same time to increase the national income.....improvement has made in the past 3 years in various fields, such as agriculture, education, etc.

In closing his message he urged the people:

"The work of national reconstruction, of improvement of the people's living standard, and the achievement of an independent economy will be successfully achieved through the will, intelligence and labour of the entire people; and the work surely will be achieved".

In considering the importance of this message, I attach the whole text to the newsclipping.

2. Meetings with Dignitaries.

a. Mr. Tran Van Lam, Speaker of the Vietnamese National Assembly.

On Monday, July 8th, I called on this high ranking Assemblyman. He greeted me in a very courteous manner. I congratulated him on the successful session of the Assembly which he had in June and also complimented him on the "Double Seven" Day's celebration. He expressed politely that the young National Assembly still has many things to do. He said the Constitution which was drafted and voted by his Assembly last year, was one of mixture of the constitutions of Korea, Philippines and U.S.A. He

217

He further said that his people are not yet in a position to fully adopt the U.S.A.'s system of democracy and her form of Government. We need time to educate our people in order to wash out all colonial - feudal way of thinking. We need a very strong and stabilized central government. The situation in Laos and Cambodia is a very good lesson to newly independent Nations. He then said that his people are fortunate to have a great patriot in the person of President Ngo Dinh Diem to lead them just as the Republic of Korea has her great leader, Your Excellency, as the First President in the struggle for Independence and Freedom. I agreed with him and told him that I carefully read the message of his President on the "Double Seven" Day. As I understand last year was devoted to new foundations for an economic independence. As many leaders of newly independent countries have stressed without economic independence, political independence cannot be preserved. I further expressed that it is very regrettable that Japan will not awake from the old imperialist "co-prosperity". It is also very strange that the United States of America as leader of the anti-colonialism, is now trying to introduce into the underdeveloped Southeast Asia a more cruel Japanese colonial power. Japan's Prime Minister Kishi's plan for a U.S. financed Southeast Asia Development is an insult to all Nations in the Southeast Asia. If the U.S. Government really is going to support Kishi's plan and finance him with U.S. dollars in order to draw its raw materials from the free Asian countries and its technicians and capital goods from Japan, will be a big mistake made by U.S. Government. Time Magazine of last week pointed out that this project would make Japan the political and economic leader of Asia. No independent Nation wants to be led by another Nation. We hope that our good friends, the Americans, will not again fall

into the Japanese trap. Apparently the American Government officials are formulating this policy in the hope to build up Japan as the leading power in the fight against communism. I told him that we could never believe that Japan will fight against any Communist; Japan just wants to get strength as rapidly as possible and then be the leader of Asia. He agreed with me on this and I said we ought to tell our American friends.

I then mentioned the incident which happened in Taipei. The contents of the talk on this matter will be illustrated in the item "Vietnamese Interpretation of the anti-American Riot in Formosa".

Since he speaks fairly good English, I enjoyed the 40-minute meeting with this high ranking National Assemblyman of this country. He was again very courteous and accompanied me to the main entrance where he remained until my car moved away.

Mr. Tran Van Lam, the Speaker of the National Assembly, was one of the candidates for "Vie-President". This function was given to an older politician and he remained as the Speaker of the National Assembly ever since. I am reporting with pleasure that my acquaintance with him is a good one, I am one of his golf partners, we have already played together several times.

b. New Zealand Commissioner to Southeast Asia, Mr. Foss Sanahan called on this Legation.

Mr. Foss Sanahan, the Ambassador ranking Commissioner, has just made a 4-day visit to Viet Nam. I had met him during my recent tour to Singapore. He was one of the people who listened to our problems with great interest. On July 5th, the day of his departure, he called on me at this Chancery. We again had a long intimate discussion on problems of Asia.

When he inquired about my recent trips around the Southeast Asian countries, I told him that there are at least two kinds of threats the leaders and the people of this area feel. They are: (1) the communist threat which is an open fact; (2) the threat of old imperialism which is the re-entry of Japanese power in this area with the generosity of our good friend, United States Government. I found that Japanese and the Red Chinese are cooperating in stirring up the racial hatred of people toward white people in order to dominate over them economically as well as politically. At this point the New Zealand diplomat told me that the Japanese told the Malayan people what they did during World War II was only anti-Chinese and anti-European. Japanese told them that they intended to help the Malayan's independence long ago. The Japanese asked them to forget all this and to let the Japanese-old-Malayan-hands come back. The New Zealand Ambassador concluded his statement by saying that of course the Japanese could not yet openly declare the above mentioned talks; they are still in the "whispering" stage. I then discussed with him the problem of Japanese expansion toward Southeast Asia; this discussion is similar to what I mentioned in the above Item 2. a "Meeting with the Speaker of the National Assembly". He told me that he warned already many of his American friends on the danger of Japanese expansion. When he inquired about the negotiations between Korea and Japan, I told him that a solution could come out only after the Japanese prove their "sincerity". I explained to him the basic items which hindered the development of Korean-Japanese negotiations. When I talked of the problem of "fishery line", I explained to him the dual purposes of the line. He agreed with us entirely and gave me an example to sup-

port our stand. He told me that several years ago there was a dispute between Iceland and Great Britain on the "fishery issue". Iceland appealed this case to the World Court. The World Court judged in favour of Iceland for the reason that the living of the people of Iceland depends on the "fishery"; therefore Iceland should have the right to preserve the fishery resources. I must admit that I am not too familiar with this Iceland-Great Britain case. However, I feel that this case explained by the New Zealand diplomat should serve as a good example in fighting for our "fishery line". I will write to the Chief of the Political Bureau of our Foreign Ministry and ask him to find out and study exactly what happened in the above mentioned Iceland-Great Britain case and if it can be used as an historical example.

This meeting with the New Zealand diplomat was a very meaningful one which lasted about 50 minutes.

He departed for Singapore at noon the same day. I was at the airport to bid him "Bon Voyage".

c. The Britannic Majesty's Ambassador, Mr. Roderick Parkers.

Ambassador Parkers called on me at this Chancery on Friday, July 5th. First of all, we greeted and congratulated the happy occasion of the recent elevating of Legations to Embassies in Seoul and in London.

Mr. Roderick Parkers arrived in Viet Nam as Ambassador only 3 months ago. He had just returned from a trip to central part of Viet Nam where he got a very hopeful impression. He praised very highly the plans of the Vietnamese Government for development of rural and mountainous areas, and predicted the

prosperity of Viet Nam with firm attitude. I believe his observation is a correct one. He then inquired about my recent trips to Southeast Asian countries. I told him that generally the leaders of these Countries are aware of the danger of communism; however, they are too frightened by the aggressive power of Red China, and every action of appeasement from Western leading powers increases the degree of this existing fear of communism. Another reason for them to lean to the "pro-communism" or "neutralism" is that they fear the old Japanese Imperialism's return. Those newly independent countries hope that the Western leading democratic countries will assist them to solve the long existing economic problem; however, they find that a certain leading Western power is now trying only to build up Japanese economic strength and neglect the ability of the people of these other countries to develop themselves. They feel someone is looking down on them and thus gives the opportunity to Red China to stir up the "racialism" which, as I see it, is too "narrow minded". He did not commit himself on this point; however, it seemed to me that he listened with keen interest. Then we talked about the big news of Soviet Russia's struggle of power. He said it is very good news to us. I told him that similar things will happen in Red China also. I was astonished to find that he did not quite agree with me on this point. He said that by reading the reports dispatched by his Country's Representative in Peking, Red China during the last seven years made tremendous progress and that heavy industry has been developed which China never had before; Red Regime's power has been consolidated into a firm controlling body. Answering his statement I told him that we have a lot of information to prove there are

- 8 -

many unrests and the heavy industry which has the only purpose of aggression put the majority of the people near death of starvation. He said: "Well, the unrest in China is not a new one; throughout China's history there has been constant unrest and starvation. But it is very interesting to listen to your views on Red China".

Apparently the British diplomat in Peking was reporting only the bright side of Red China and no mention of the other side - which is the dark side.

Although we did not quite agree all along, I feel it was a worthwhile talk with a high ranking diplomat of a friendly nation.

d. Called on French Ambassador Mr. Jean Payart.

The new French Ambassador arrived in Viet Nam while I was on my tour of Southeast Asia. I called on him to express my thanks for his kindness of sending his Deputy to the airport to greet our new Envoy, Mr. Young Sik Kim, while he was on his way to Paris. I then referred to several facts to show how close is the relationship between our two countries. I specified the fact that the French Expeditionary Force joined the United Nations Forces to fight the Communists in Korea and later the same battalion moved to Viet Nam to fight Communist Ho Chi Minh forces, which proves that world communism is the same evil communism and has no difference of nationality or race. I told him that his Country had appointed one of the most famous generals, General Montrogul, as the first commanding officer of that force that we admired so much. The French Ambassador expressed his highest admiration for the spirit of our people and Your Excellency in the fight for independence and also in the fight against World Communism.

JH



- 9 -

I then described, in a very brief way, my trips to Southeast Asian countries. I told him that the danger of Japan's "co-prosperity" strategy is no less than the Communist's threat. We know that French people did experience the bitter lesson of Japanese coup d'etat during French authority in Viet Nam in March 1945. It seemed to me that the French Ambassador was reminded of it and agreed on the "Japanese danger". My First Secretary Bying Sik Son accompanied me as my French interpreter.

3. Vietnamese Interpretation of the anti-American Riot in Formosa.

I am writing this item to answer Your Excellency's inquiry made in Instruction No.71 dated June 29, 1957, on the said subject.

The anti-American riot in Formosa was very significantly covered by many Chinese papers here; however, I really could not find anything more than one very short item of comments made by Viet Nam Press which reads:

"On humanitarian and moral points of view, it is regrettable that such event has occurred. We hope that such a regretful thing will never happen in Viet Nam....."

Strict control of press and publication is the present policy of the Government of Viet Nam. She did not want to publicize this regrettable incident in an emphatic way and she did not wish to comment on it at all. Apparently, the Vietnamese Government was afraid that by publicizing this bad example could affect somehow the moral of Vietnamese people and the people could comment it in disfavour of Americans. As Viet Nam Press

244



- 10 -

said she hopes that such a regretful thing will never happen in Viet Nam.

Since I could not get an answer on this question from the Vietnamese Press and newspapers, I tried to get the opinion of the Speaker of National Assembly. He is not a Government official, however, his opinion should be able to represent the opinion of the Vietnamese political leaders as well as the people. What he told me was not a direct but a remote cause. He felt all facts of the direct cause were already mentioned by the Chinese and other foreigners quite thoroughly. I took a brief note of his opinion on this anti-American riot as follows:

"The living standard of the Chinese people in Formosa is much lower than that of Americans. Even the high ranking officials of Chinese Government in Formosa are living in a frugal way. On the contrary, the American Diplomats and Servicemen in Formosa are living in pretty luxurious way. It is of human nature that a poor man will be jealous of the rich".

My impression on his comments is that he felt the Americans abroad should restrain from their luxurious life and by mentioning the Chinese officials' frugal life he explained the reason why the officials of the Chinese Government could or would not take a positive measure to stop the incident at the beginning.

I do not think that the above illustration will meet Your Excellency's inquiry satisfactorily; however, I must

285

admit this is all I could find out from Vietnamese side on the mentioned question. What the Chinese people in Viet Nam expressed on the incident was not important because it was very similar to that which the Chinese in Formosa expressed.

4. Viet Nam Affairs.

a. Colombo Plan Conference.

It has been announced that the "Colombo Plan" Conference of 1957 will meet in Saigon this coming October. The Vietnamese Government is asking if the Republic of Korea would consider to accept the invitation as an "observer" at the forthcoming "Colombo Plan" Conference. This invitation goes only to the Republic of Korea this time, because the Government of Viet Nam feels that the Republic of Korea should share the full membership of this "Colombo Plan". A responsible official of Foreign Ministry expressed the confidence of obtaining the welcome of all members the Republic of Korea to become a full member of the "Colombo Plan".

I humbly hope that Your Excellency will consider it as a very friendly gesture on the part of the Government of Viet Nam and instruct me what action I should take on this invitation.

b. Chinese Problem.

There was no significant new development on the Chinese repatriation problem. A communique from the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry gives a light to the outside world what is going on concerning Chinese desiring to return to Formosa. This communique firstly pointed out the list drawn up by Chinese Legation including names of many persons who are not entitled to be repatriated and gave the reasons for that. At the end of this communique it was stated:

"so, of 630 Chinese registered on the first list set up by the Chinese Legation, there are only 311 reported to the authorities for establishment of repatriation cards. 55 are reported unknown at the indicated addresses and 10 have demanded to remain in Viet Nam....."

I attach the text of this communique to the newsclipping for information. The Chinese Government has dispatched 3 officers to Viet Nam to take care of this repatriation task. The same Government has announced many times that there were 3 ships ready to depart for Viet Nam around the end of June or early July; however, recently it was learned that those ships are only in "alert" but don't know when these ships will come. Apparently, the Chinese Government is not sure how many of her compatriots residing in Viet Nam will actually move on board these ships. It is still hard to find out even the approximate number of Chinese born in Viet Nam wanting to be repatriated.

5. Political Crises in Laos and Cambodia.

a. Laos.

The second Premier-designate, whose policy I reported to be a much worse one, has failed to form a government, as we predicted.

Now there is a news reported:

"Mr. Katay Don Sasorith who once failed to obtain investiture from the National Assembly early last month, was requested by the Crown

287

-13-

Prince Savang Vatthana a second time to form a new government. Circles close to the Premier-designate said that the common hope was to obtain the participation of all parties' leaders, especially that of outgoing Premier and the second Premier-designate".

Known to me, the staunch anti-Communist leader, Mr. Katay, is the leader of the largest group in the National Assembly. However, his group has only 22 among 39 seats of the Assembly. This number is not sufficient to obtain two-third of majority which is needed for investiture according to the constitution.

b. Cambodia.

The Cabinet crises of the Kingdom of Cambodia remained unsolved up to this date.

Soon after the preliminary consultation, the National Assembly discarded the candidacies which had been manifested so far. However, a struggle was mounting between Prince Sihanouk's Sangkum party and the Democratic party. The latter was stepping up new attacks on the outgoing Sihanouk Cabinet. Up to now there is no sign that political crises of Cambodia will be solved soon.

6. Social Activities.

a. On Friday July 5th, New Zealand's Commissioner to Southeast Asia and Britannic Majesty's Ambassador called on me as I mentioned in Item 2 of this report.

In the evening I was invited by American Chief Military Attache, Colonel Woodbury, for dinner. The American Ambassador was also among the many guests.

288



- 14 -

b. On Saturday July 6th, in the evening I attended the reception offered by Dr. Jordon, Chief of Agriculture Bureau of USOM.

c. On Sunday July 7th, I attended the celebrations of Vietnamese "Double Seven" Day and also signed the "Golden Book" in the Independence Palace.

d. On Monday July 8th, I called on Mr. Tran Van Lam, the Speaker of National Assembly.

e. On Wednesday July 10th, I called on the French Ambassador Mr. Jean Payart.

I am submitting a photo album (Trip to Southeast Asia) with humble regret that it is not a complete one and also wish to apologize that it has been so delayed.

With sentiments of deepest loyalty and highest esteem,

Respectfully,

Choi Duk Shin

Choi, Duk Shin

Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary
of the Republic of Korea to Vietnam

His Excellency

President of Republic of Korea.

- Attachments:
1. Photo Album (Trip to Southeast Asia)
 2. "What Happened in Vietnam"
 3. Copy of Report CDS-R No.008 (to Foreign Minister)
 4. Photo-Newsclipping

219