

October 12, 1956

**CDS Report No. 19 from Choi Duk Shin to the
President (Syngman Rhee)**

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Summary:

Choi Duk Shin reports on the rapid recovery of South Korea, recent Vietnamese anti-communist and political activities, and Vietnam's invitation to General Chung Il-Kwan.

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Friday, October 12, 1956

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CDS REPORT NO. 019

Excellency,

Firstly, I wish to report to Your Excellency that I left Seoul on Monday, 8th October and arrived in Saigon on Wednesday, 10th October.

I have the honour to submit my Weekly Report No. 019, which I am resuming after an absence of about three weeks from my post here in Saigon. This report will, in the main, cover my impressions concerning the fact-finding trip in my home country and also will summarize very briefly the happenings in Vietnam during the past month.

The sequence of this report will be:

1. Receipt of Instructions
2. Improvements in my country noted by me
3. Vietnam Affairs
4. The Government of Republic of Vietnam invites General Chung Il-Kwan
5. Social Activities.

1. Receipt of Instructions.

I wish to acknowledge with deepest thanks receipt of Your Excellency's Instructions Nos. 16 and 17 dated September 13, 1956. Also No. 18 dated September 20, 1956, which was addressed to Secretary Byung Shik Sohn who was in charge of the affairs of this Legation during my absence from Vietnam.

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There have been no changes in the Legation and I would like at this time to comment that my Second Secretary, Byung Shik Sohn and my Military Attache, Lieutenant Colonel Tak-Gen Lee, did very well during the period of my absence.

2. Improvements in my country noted by me.

a. Industrial progress.

It is with much pleasure that I am reporting this item to Your Excellency because the accomplishments in the fields of Industrial development and work of reconstruction which I saw in my country have impressed me greatly.

The whole of the industry of our country was laid in twisted wreckage during the war and remained this way even after the Cease Fire. Today, the scene is entirely changed. I saw that the damaged and deteriorated machinery and equipment have been replaced by new and modern types. The managers and workmen of our factories are adopting modern production methods. I also saw raw materials being fed into the new machines. The machines in some of the factories are the newest models, and I was glad to learn from the workmen and managers that the old Japanese machinery is now outmoded by about 20 years. I told them that not only is the Japanese machinery outmoded, but the production methods and manner of management were outmoded long ago. It is important that we adopt the most modern equipment, methods of production and operation in order to 'catch up' in the very near future with countries who are now so advanced industrially. Again, I wish to say that under the farsighted leadership of Your Excellency that our country is going in the right direction in the industrial field and will take her proper place in the industrial world.

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2cc: Mr. Park
However, the facts of our industrial improvements are known by few people, especially the foreigners who seem to be in complete ignorance of these improvements. This is mainly because our public information work does not seem to guide itself towards these matters. I regret to advise that people of other countries seem to even doubt our ability to develop our industries and they know nothing of the facts of our accomplishments in the industrial field. I would humbly suggest that from now on our public information work should make every endeavour to direct their efforts to these matters in order to educate and to encourage our own countrymen and countrywomen to buy the home products and, further, to bring our country into proper focus in the eyes of the people of other countries who do not know of our accomplishments and our aim to take our rightful place in the world.

We should print more news items giving our accomplishments since the war: the strides we have taken in the industrial field and in reconstruction work; the rehabilitation of our cities and towns, and the development of our home industries. The weekly bulletin of our Legation is available to give this matter high priority.

I am arranging to place in a glass cabinet, as a small exhibit, a few samples of homemade products which I brought back from home this time in order that the people who visit my Legation can see these products. Although they are too few in number to represent the whole picture of our industrial field, I believe it will help us at least to show our development and improvements in this field.

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In this connection I also recommend that the Defense Ministry should plan to use homemade equipment: for example, utilize the homemade bicycles in the Armed Forces, as a part of organizational equipment. This is not only sound from the economic point of view, but it is also sound for tactical reasons. It is also recommended that ordinary every day items used by the members of the Armed Forces be ordered and purchased from our own textile plants and other factories.

According to Your Excellency's oral instructions, I already discussed the above mentioned matter with the officials of the Defense Ministry. I regret that I did not have the opportunity to talk directly with Minister Kim of the Defense Ministry.

b. Army

During my tour I visited First Army, Second Army and the Training Centers and schools.

Generally, they are still maintaining their high standards. One matter for concern is that the numbers of soldiers who are battle-seasoned are decreasing very rapidly and being replaced by inexperienced new recruits according to the present discharge program. The Defense Ministry should study the measure of keeping the battle-seasoned men in the non-commissioned officers corps. The present conscription law permits a stay in the army of three years. This three-year stay is just sufficient to have them well-trained. After three well-trained years, only very few want to remain in the Army. This is especially serious in the technical fields. These skilled technicians, such as drivers, mechanics, radio operators, etc. are very important to run a modern-equipped army. However, they do not want to remain beyond the three-years service. Their main reason is that they can get better payment 175

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in civilian life. I feel it is necessary to set up a permanent NCO (Non-Commissioned Officers) payment system to attract the trained men voluntarily to stay longer. We have already a professional Officers Corps to lead the soldiers in winning the war. We also need professional Non-Commissioned Officers to lead the squad, the smallest unit of the Army, also let them run the specialized field in the army.

The NCO System of the U.S. Army can be a very good example for us in considering this matter.

c. Air Show

The air show on the 1st of October in the presence of Your Excellency was excellent. It was only two years ago when we accompanied Your Excellency to the U.S.A. that General Kim Jung-Jul, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, negotiated with the U.S. Air Force people to equip our Air Force with Jet-fighters. It was only one year ago when our Air Force started to receive jet training aircraft to train our young pilots. Today, we see in this air show the really tremendous skill demonstrated by our country's young men in the blue air. I can imagine how happy Your Excellency was and also to know how the people felt the confidence in our young, but potentially strong airmen.

In view of the prospective future war and the geographical conditions which exist, I sincerely believe that we ought to develop our Air Force. Although we are not yet in the stage of being able to build any aircraft ourselves, yet I am confident that we have strong potentialities to train the best qualified pilots. Purely from the physical point of view the young men of Korea possess

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ability to be trained as the best pilots. Our reputation for good marathon-running proves that the Korean youngsters have balanced healthy bodies. It proves also that we have good eyes. These two factors alone give me confidence that I dare to tell friends "the Korean pilots can be the best qualified pilots, if they can receive proper training and preserve their physique in good condition".

In this connection I would like to report to Your Excellency the fact that our pilots daily feeding is counted in terms of money, according to the cost of living, while many other countries feed their pilots the same quality of food. This means their daily food is not affected in any way by change in cost of the food, whether it is up or down. I do not believe that if we change our financing system for the pilots - of whom we have only several hundreds at the present time - that we will place too much of a financial burden on our government. If it is adopted, it will certainly greatly increase the capability of our airmen's fighting both physically and mentally.

3. Vietnam Affairs.

a. Anti-Communist Activities. These activities still continue at very high tide. During the past weeks there has been a wave of more than 15 anti-Communist activities conducted in various areas and societies of this new Republic. These activities were not only conducted in big cities and towns, but were also conducted in the small towns and villages. For example, a series of anti-Communist meetings were held on September 14, 15 and 16, 1956 respectively in the different villages of Batri district in

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Bentre Province (on the Southeastern coast of Vietnam) which were aimed at launching a Communist Activities Denunciation campaign. These demonstrations were attended by a large number of villagers, during which numerous compatriots, victims of the barbarious treatment dealt them by the Communists, took the floor to denounce the crimes committed by the Red-Vietminh. The demonstrators then pledged support and loyalty to the government of President Ngo.

b. Communists rally to the National Cause.

The anti-Communists Movements in this country are quickly attaining their objective. It was learned during the past four weeks that more than 500 (five hundred) former Communist Vietminh cadres rallied to the national cause. Most of them reported themselves to the National authorities and asked to rally to the national cause. They said: "..... the policy now followed by the Government of President Ngo proved to be the unique way to achieve a complete independence While the Republic of Vietnam regime is working for lasting peace and the people's welfare, the Communist Vietminh are seeking to lead the people down to slavery".

All these results were obtained by the guidance of the anti-Communist campaign Central and Local Steering Committees and the efforts rendered by all governmental officials and people.

These campaigns are continuing processes and already there are thousands of former Communists who have surrendered to the National authorities since President Ngo Dinh Diem launched these campaigns one year ago.

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c. Anti-Illiteracy Campaign.

There is one more important campaign the government of the Republic of Vietnam is launching and that is the Anti-Illiteracy Campaign.

Under the longtime rule of colonialism and feudalism and the aggression of Communism the people of Vietnam could have only little opportunity to send their children to school because the rulers did not intend to educate the masses and the unrest of Communist activities gave them no chance to study. There was 90 percent of people illiterate when President Diem's government took over power. Now the government is launching this important campaign to eliminate illiteracy amongst the people as soon as possible.

d. Conference of Vietnamese Diplomatic Missions' Heads to be held from October 6 to 14, 1956.

The Conference of the Chiefs of Diplomatic and Consular Missions of the Republic of Vietnam is being held since last Saturday until this coming Sunday. All the Heads of Diplomatic Missions of this country were called back for this conference. The Minister of Republic of Vietnam to our country, General Doung Van Duc, left Seoul on the 1st of October, and is here in Saigon to attend the above-mentioned conference. It is reported that he will be back in Seoul about the 20th of October.

This is the first time in its history that a conference of this kind has been organized by Vietnam. The Vietnamese people say that this conference would not have been possible if it had not been for the recovery of their internal and external sovereignty. Since the proclamation of the Republic of Vietnam on October 26, 1955, Vietnam has been endeavouring to work for its internal security and a sound economy.

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So far no disclosure of the contents of the conference has been made. However, I believe one of the topics of discussion is how to bring into great publicity the forthcoming National Day, the 26th of October. One month ago I learned that the heads of the diplomatic missions would come back to Vietnam to attend their National Day's celebration. However, the Government decided to hold the conference prior to their National Day and in this way permit the Heads of their Missions to celebrate their National Day in the countries in which they are representing Vietnam. In this way - and in my opinion it is a wise decision - it will draw much more attention abroad if they celebrate their National Day in the respectively stationed countries. It would not draw much attention to have them celebrate their National Day at home in their own country.

e. The Vietnamese delegation to the Asian anti-Communist Youth and Students Congress held in Seoul from October 15 to 20, left Saigon on October 9.

The delegation is composed of three members:

Mr. Thai Khac Phan, Chief

Mr. Nguyen Van Thuc, Member

Mrs. Nguyen Thai, Woman Member

4. The Government of the Republic of Vietnam invites General Chung Il Kwan, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on the occasion of the National Day.

On October 12 I made a courtesy call on the Foreign Minister, Mr. Vu Van Mau, and also on the Acting Defense Minister, Mr. Tran Trung Dung. They were much pleased and happy that we can send

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the highest ranking general of the fourth largest army in the world. I was told by the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Vietnam that I could cable my Government concerning this matter immediately. I believe the cable will have already reached Your Excellency's office prior to the arrival of this report.

General Williams was also very much pleased to learn that General Chung can come for this big occasion.

5. Social Activities.

October 10. On the evening of my return to Saigon, I went to the Reception given by Free China's Legation on the occasion of the "Double Ten" celebration.

October 12. On this day I called on the Foreign Minister and Defense Minister. Also, I received at my Legation General Doung Van Duc, the Vietnamese Minister to our country.

Besides the discussion of General Chung's visit to Vietnam, I mentioned to the Foreign Minister the fine products of my country which I had seen while I was home. He expressed the possibility of an exchange of products and he said we ought to exchange goodwill missions to deepen the understanding in the various fields. He expressed also his welcome of the Economic-fact-finding Mission of Republic of Korea to Southeast Asia, and promised to send a similar Mission to our country in the future.

With sentiments of deepest loyalty and highest esteem,

Respectfully,
Choi Duk Shin
Choi, Duk Shin
Minister of Korea to Vietnam

His Excellency

President of the Republic of Korea.

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