

September 8, 1956
Report No. 94 from Young Kee Kim to Syngman Rhee

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Summary:

Young Kee Kim briefs Syngman Rhee on the Baguio military staff conference and labor recruitment of Filipino workers to California.

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Report No. 94

LEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA
MANILA, PHILIPPINES

September 8, 1956

Dear Mr. President:

The military staff planners conference of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization held in Baguio comes to an end after one week of secret sessions. Air Marshal Sir Francis Fressanger, chief delegate of the United Kingdom to the third military advisors conference, assured that the Commonwealth strategic reserve in the SEATO is in readiness to rush to the succor of any of the beleaguered members of the Manila Pact nations. Fressanger is the commander-in-chief of the United Kingdom's Far East Air Force with headquarters in Singapore.

Admiral Felix B. Stump, chief U.S. delegate, committed the U.S. Seventh Fleet to the defense of the SEATO area. In case nuclear weapons are used in the SEATO area, it must have the sanction from the U.S. State Department.

It is reliably informed that the Baguio conference discussed three phases in the operation of the tactical movement: 1) form of base of common understanding; 2) preparation for common defense of the SEATO signatory nations; and 3) permanent base for the solution of the difficulties, including the standardization of equipment, training and logistic support. The Philippines, impatient with "swivel chair strategem", called for the immediate and realistic implementation of the SEATO pact and favors the NATO-type of defense which calls for a united command and combat, ready standing force for each nation.

Rear Admiral H.M.S. Choudree, chief Pakistan delegate and commander-in-chief of the Pakistan Navy, said that the entire armed forces of Pakistan are ready to go to the aid of any threatened fellow SEATO member country. He further said that his country has benefited from the SEATO in building up her forces and that his country was able to buy one cruiser and four destroyers from the United Kingdom through the treaty alliance.

Major General Cyril Wier, New Zealand chief delegate, said that "in the face of present international tension, no nation can stand alone and seek defense arrangement with other countries." French Admiral Ortili pledged his country's mobility of armed forces to the defense of the SEATO area. Australian Embassy announced its government's contribution of P1.1 million in goods and service to the Philippines with no strings attached to it. The Baguio conference was fruitful as the powerful nations' delegates made definite commitments to defend any member nation against aggression.

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Bangkok has been chosen as the site of the headquarters of the SEATO's permanent military staff, in view of the fact that the SEATO council of ministers and the secretariat already have been established in Bangkok. A brigadier general from a member country will head the staff of military planners.

SEATO defense combined training exercises will be held as follows:

1) maritime exercises in the South China Sea in October, 1956 and in April, 1957.

2) combined air and ground center staff exercises in Thailand in January, 1957.

3) military exercises in a smaller unit in the Philippines in April, 1957 and a small force exercise in Thailand in May, 1957.

The next meeting for the military advisory group is scheduled to be held in the early part of 1957.

Following your cable instructions, we shall hold a reception in honor of U.S. Senate Chaplain Frederick B. Harris at the Legation residence on Tuesday afternoon, September 11. About one hundred persons have been invited to meet the honored guest. The American Embassy will arrange for Dr. Harris to pay a courtesy call on President Magsaysay.

President Magsaysay counselled some members of Congress and provincial governors against too much politics and urged them to cooperate with the administration, when several solons headed by Senate President Eulogio Rodriguez presented their "manifesto" of loyalty and support. Some of the governors who signed the pledge come from the Liberal Party.

Although the 1957 national election is still a year off, the re-election of President Magsaysay is the talk of the current political tirade. Governor Feliciano Leviste of Batangas province, charged that Mr. Magsaysay was destroying the freedom of speech by having many newspapermen in the government payroll. The governor is all out for the support of the presidential candidacy of Senator Jose P. Laurel of the same province.

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The President and the legislators decided to accept the proposed agreement on labor recruitment negotiated by Ambassador Carlos P. Romulo with the Fruit Growers Association of California. Under the proposed agreement, the American association is authorized to recruit 1000 laborers who are willing to go at their own

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expense and work for a period of three years. The Filipino workers will receive from \$.75 to \$.95 per hour and will be allowed to work eight hours a day. After three years, an industrious farmer can expect to return to the Philippines with as much as \$7,000 as savings of his take-home pay. The American Fruit Growers Association will send a representative here to screen the applicants and recruit 100 persons for the start. It is revealed by the National Economic Council that out of 9.5 million in labor force, 8,315,000 are employed leaving 1,185,000 unemployed.

Faithfully yours,

Young Kee Kim
YOUNG KEE KIM

His Excellency Syngman Rhee,
President of the Republic of Korea,
Seoul.

Copy to Acting Foreign Minister Chung Whan Cho.