

May 9, 1956
Report No. 82 from Young Kee Kim to Syngman Rhee

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Summary:

Young Kee Kim briefs President Rhee on the decision to accept Japanese war reparations by the Philippines. He also suggests that Korean Navy should include Bangkok in its goodwill tour.

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Report No. 82 *22a***LEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA**
MANILA, PHILIPPINES

May 9, 1956

Dear Mr. President:

In Philippine Congress, all attention has been focused on the controversial issue of compulsory reading of Rizal's two novels. The Catholic hierarchy has come out openly and defied the lawmakers who favor the adoption of the Laurel bill on the compulsory reading of Rizal's two novels in schools, colleges and universities. The solons are sorely enraged when the higher priests challenged the legislators that the passage of such a bill will violate the Philippine Constitution, and furthermore, they will be punished at the next poll. If this issue prolongs in the congressional debate, a special session of Congress will become necessary to wind up so many unfinished business.

The last barrier on the Philippine side towards the final settlement of Jap war damage reparations was all cleared and the Philippine reparations plenipotentiary panels voted for the signing of the agreement. The Japanese reparations plenipotentiary envoys, who arrived here yesterday, will formalize the agreement and return to Tokyo to present the same to the Japanese Diet for its approval before the Diet adjourns. Both countries are anxious to normalize their diplomatic relations as soon as the reparations settlement is accomplished.

From the Japanese standpoint, Indonesia and Korean questions remain unsettled. Japan expects to do Sixty Million Dollar trade with the Philippines after the signing of the reparations agreement. Japan needs all the iron ores and non-ferrous metals from the Philippines, and in return the Philippines will import finished products in the form of machinery and textiles.

A recent Associated Press from Seoul reported in the local press that the ROK Navy goodwill and training ships will again visit the Philippines and Hongkong this coming June. If our Navy wants the midshipmen to have the training cruise adjacent to the Southeast Asia, it would be a good idea to have the ROK Navy pay a goodwill visit to Bangkok. That will enhance the prestige of our navy and promote the friendly relations between the two countries. Thailand was the first nation in the Orient that sent army, navy and air forces to the Korean War. Besides, Bangkok,

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being the headquarters of the SEATO and many other UN organizations' regional activities, the visit of our navy flotilla will receive more favorable reception from the government and people of Thailand.

If I can be of service to make preliminary contact with the Thai Ambassador in Manila with regard to the visit of our navy training ships to Bangkok, I shall be happy to do so. On previous occasions when our navy goodwill mission visited Manila, the overture of the Korean navy's goodwill visit to Bangkok was welcomed by the Royal Thai army, navy and air force attaches who participated in the Korean War.

Maj. General Wayne C. Smith, Chief of the Joint U.S. Military Advisory Group, has been relieved of his post on account of physical disability, and he will leave Manila with much regret where he has been for about a year. He is well liked by the Armed Forces of the Philippines for his honest effort in building up the strength of the Philippine defense. He was the commanding general in Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, prior to his wartime duty in Korea in 1951-52. He was one of the first organizers of the ROK army and he is a good friend of Korea. I will give a black tie dinner in honor of General and Mrs. Smith at our Legation residence next Tuesday evening.

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.

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