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"C" KOREA. South Korean Popular Discontent Increases with Improved Military Situation. Ambassador Muccio reports that, as the military situation has improved, popular discontent with the extraordinary martial law which has been in effect throughout South Korea since 7 December has increased. The ROK Government has been forced gradually, and apparently reluctantly, to lift martial law on Cheju Island and in the five southernmost provinces where immediate danger obviously no longer exists. Excepted areas are certain guerrilla-infested sections, and also Fusan and Taegu. As logistical military bases the Government claims that these two cities require special protection against fifth column activity. [redacted]

COMMENT: While this is Muccio's first cable in some time relative to popular dissatisfaction with the South Korean Government, [redacted] that the Government's arbitrary and dictatorial ways have aroused opposition among the people and in the National Assembly. The volume of criticism of such unpopular measures as the Government's martial law has and will continue to reflect UN military successes and failures.

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APPROVED FOR RELEASE
DATE: 01-Mar-2010

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"B" BELGIUM. Communists Sabotage Postal Communications with Belgian Korean Volunteers. According to the head of the committee urging civilian support for the Belgian contingent to Korea, the Belgian Communists have thus far effectively sabotaged communications between the volunteers in Korea and their families. The Communists have infiltrated the Ministry of Communications so that letters have been burned by Communist-influenced postmen and packages to the troops in Korea have been pilfered off the ships. The Belgian public and press have remained silent due to the reluctance of the Minister of Communications and currently Acting Prime Minister Seegers to admit this state of affairs in his Ministry.

COMMENT: This is the first indication of the present extent of Communist infiltration in the Ministry of Communications. Communist influence in the Government's Ministries is believed to have become negligible following the immediate postwar period. If Communist sabotage activities have been as successful as indicated for the more than four months that Belgian troops have been in Korea, it seems highly unlikely that the situation has not been leaked to the press. Furthermore, Seeger's reluctance to take action does not seem plausible in view of the Government's aggressive anti-Communist campaign, which includes the dismissal of Government employees actively combining Communist activities with their Government positions.

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"B" KOREA. ROK Interest in Extending Administration North of the 38th. Ambassador Austin has learned from UN sources of a recent call paid by the ROK Prime Minister to the Turkish chairman of UNCURK (United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea). The Prime Minister inquired relative to UNCURK's position on the question of administering North Korean territory which may be liberated in the future, and he expressed the wish that UNCURK would agree that the ROK has the right to appoint local administrators and to insure public order through the use of ROK police. The Chairman was non-committal but took the position that the liberated areas should be under military administration.

COMMENT: A similar problem arose when UN Forces advanced into North Korea last October. This is the first notice this year, however, of renewed ROK interest in administering liberated North Korean territory. The Prime Minister's inquiry is a further indication of the ROK Government's determination to eradicate the 38th Parallel as a political boundary and to extend its authority to the Yalu River.