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FAR EAST SURVEY
6 JULY 1951

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NORTH KOREA: CEASE-FIRE PROPOSAL PROOF OF AMERICAN FAILURE

While comment during the first of the two weeks under review is primarily concerned with the anniversary of the war, stress in the second week is placed on the cease-fire exchanges between General Ridgway and the Communist commanders. In addition to the factual presentation of the exchanges, there is unanimous agreement on the claim that Ridgway was "faced with complete failure in Korea." He is said to have been forced to take action by world public opinion which realized that the North Korean people "never succumbed" to the treacherous onslaught of the 16 interventionist nations. (3 July)

One commentary, more detailed than the others, claims that Ridgway's proposal "shows that after having been beaten by the inexhaustible might of the Korean people and the support given them by the Soviet Union, China and all other peace-loving nations, the United States has realized that it cannot achieve the results expected--to conquer the Korean people by armed force." In the future, another commentary maintains, "the success of the peace negotiations will depend on the American attitude." (3 July)

The Military Situation: Military communiques claim conventionally that the North Korean forces and the Chinese volunteers are successfully fighting off the U.N. attacks. The First Corps of the U.S. 24th Division is reported to have been annihilated, together with "hired French troops and the 3rd, 5th, 7th and 9th Divisions of the Syngman Rhee puppet forces." Radio Pyongyang makes much of the "growing strength" of the air force and asserts that the enemy is "trembling" before the might and courage of its "young hawks" and "valiant eagles." (1 July) Night bombers are said to have successfully attacked such targets as Seoul and Inchon.

Epidemic Prevention; Cocoon Production; South Korean Corruption: In non-military contexts, Pyongyang reports that the work of the epidemic-prevention team of the Chinese Red Cross and of a Rumanian medical team has been "enthusiastically welcomed" by the population. There are the usual reports of the homefront effort to spur industrial and agricultural production, savings, and the like, with especial pride expressed in the production of cocoons--"our most important industry for the acquisition of foreign exchange." South of the 38th Parallel, on the other hand, "embezzlement of public money and munitions supplies by high-ranking officials and officers" is said to be rampant.

SOUTH KOREA SKEPTICAL CONCERNING "THE BOMB THROWN BY MALIK"

Pusan's reaction to the cease-fire developments is in direct contrast to that of the North Korean radio, for it declares that "if the Communists give up the war in Korea, this will be a victory for the Republic of Korea and a victory for the U.N. decision on Korea." As a matter of fact, it is contended, the Communists' defeat has already been revealed by events: the morale of the troops is deteriorating fast, the Communists cannot hope to win, and have lost all hope of victory. Communist China, particularly, it is claimed, "is in no shape to continue the war."

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Malik Proposal Sheer Propaganda: Considered from this point of view, the Pusan radio contends, Malik's proposal "is no more than propaganda in the face of Communist defeat," and commentators continue to question whether "the Communists can be trusted." South Koreans are cautioned against the spread of rumors concerning the cease-fire proposal "because this would aid the fifth column." Although there are indications of definite release of tension and decline in opposition to the cease-fire steps following the demarches made by General Ridgway, commentators continue to evidence doubt and skepticism. "We people of South Korea have our doubts about the Communists," one speaker declares. "It remains to be seen whether the Malik proposal is a cunning means to gain a breathing spell to regroup forces in an attempt to enslave the Korean people." Another commentator, however, declared: "If the international Communists understand the true situation, we can hope for enduring peace."

Official Resistance to Divided Korea Remains: The National Assembly has not reiterated its 30 June opposition to the Malik proposal as envisaging the formation of a divided Korea, but there is an atmosphere of watchful waiting following Ridgway's suggestion that peace talks to be undertaken in the field. On 27 June Syngman Rhee declares that it would be insulting to both the North and South Korean peoples "to base a truce or cease-fire on anything short of unification." On 4 July Rhee categorically rejects a truce based on division along the 38th Parallel and claims that, in view of the sacrifices of the Koreans and their allies, "we cannot accept the 38th Parallel."