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SPECIAL REPORT
14 MAY 1948

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Korea

KOREA: FRAUDULENT ELECTIONS

Moscow's comment prior to the elections in South Korea and its reportage of the actual balloting follow predictable patterns. The election is denounced as clear proof of America's intent to divide and "colonize" Korea. Subsequent reports of the voting underscore the claim that "a tense atmosphere of police control" pervaded the southern zone on 10 May. The question of withdrawal of troops is also handled in predictable fashion; the note from General Korotkov is reported as evidence of the Soviet intent to foster the independent development of Korea. On the issue of power supplies for the American zone Moscow has nothing to say. Pyongyang, however, devotes appreciable broadcast time to the notes of Korean officials on this subject. It also devotes appreciable time to reporting General Korotkov's note but broadcasts a slightly different version than that reported by TASS and Moscow.

a. The Elections Are Undemocratic: Danilov, Ermashev, unidentified commentators, TRUD, and IZVESTIA all discuss the Korean election and all heavily emphasize American perfidy in foisting the voting upon the Korean people. This emphasis has characterized Soviet radio comment on the election ever since it was proposed. The commentators all chant the claim that America forced the U.N. to create the Temporary Commission on Korea, forced the Commission to approve its plans for an election and forced the Koreans to the polls--all in order to legalize its attempt to establish a separate "puppet" government south of the 38th parallel.

The IZVESTIA article, however, takes a slightly different slant than do the others in that it uses the election to contradict Senator Vandenberg's 26 April speech to the Michigan Chamber of Commerce. IZVESTIA singles out Vandenberg's statement that the United States seeks to allow all nations to determine their own future, and claims that the election proposal gives the lie to this statement. The article is broadcast to Asia in Korean, Japanese, and Russian on 6 and 8 May. It alleges that the Korean people and the U.N. are really opposed to the election and were forced into it in direct contradiction of Vandenberg's claim.

Reports since the 10 May voting have quoted such sources as REUTERS, AFP, and the NEW YORK TIMES as describing the ubiquitous "American military police" who patrolled the streets, protected the polling booths, guarded members of the U.N. Commission, etc. on 10 May. Typical of this attempt to discredit the elections is the following TASS report:

"Nanking--Analyzing the 'elections' in south Korea, the HSIN MIN PAO writes editorially that they were totally undemocratic and that only one third of the population was granted suffrage. This paper further says that free expression of popular will was out of the question as the 'elections' were conducted under the 'protection' of a 60,000-strong armed police force and one million 'volunteers.'"

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Pyongyang also reported instances of American terrorism on the day of the election and reported that hundreds were arrested for attempting to protest the elections.

b. Withdrawal of Troops: Moscow follows the customary pattern of detached reporting with reference to General Korotkov's letter indicating continuing Soviet willingness to withdraw troops as soon as America does so. The letter is reported in a Korean-language broadcast of 8 May which quotes the TASS version published by PRAVDA on 8 May. This version differs somewhat from that broadcast repeatedly by Pyongyang.

Moscow quotes the General as declaring that "the Government of the USSR still is prepared to withdraw its troops promptly from Korea if the United States of America withdraws its troops from Korea simultaneously." Pyongyang, however, reports the General's concluding paragraph as follows:

"The Government of the USSR has had the necessary arrangements made for the immediate withdrawal of its troops from Korea in order to make the American troops withdraw from Korea simultaneously."