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WEEKLY SURVEY
15 OCTOBER 1948

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Korea

KOREA: DELIGHT IN THE NORTH; DISMAY IN THE SOUTH

Moscow radio continues to extol Soviet generosity, as exemplified in the decision to withdraw troops, and to contrast it with American imperialism, of which alleged current unrest among Korean Assemblymen is said to be a reflection. Thus the decision to withdraw troops is reported as the extremely popular act of the beneficent USSR, while the transfer-of-administrative-authority bill, which has caused dissatisfaction in Seoul, is offered as the most recent unpopular act of the selfish United States.

Supplementing this usual theme, Moscow also devotes extensive reportorial attention to the measures being taken by the Pyongyang Government to stabilize its position. A Home service broadcast of 12 October reports the message from Kim Il Sung in which he requests that diplomatic relations be established between Moscow and Pyongyang and follows with a report of the affirmative reply from Stalin. The letters are said to have received prominent play in Soviet newspapers of 13 October. Moscow and TASS also give extensive coverage to the Pyongyang Government's request for visas so that its representatives may attend the General Assembly session in Paris.

a. Delight in the North: North Korean delight over the withdrawal of troops is said to be increasing daily as the time draws near for the actual withdrawal. Pyongyang radio reports, and Moscow rebroadcasts the announcement, that "send off" parties are being arranged by the jubilant citizenry of northern Korea. This week, however, this theme seldom receives independent treatment; it is more often combined with documentation of the charge that the U.S. is planning to remain in control of South Korea permanently.

Merkov sums up the standard identification of Korea's "true" and "false" friends in a Korean-language broadcast of 10 October. The article is taken from NEW TIMES and departs from the usual only in identifying Kim Il Sung as being the son "of a revolutionary teacher in a farm village in South Manchuria." Previous broadcasts have not mentioned Kim's parentage.

b. Dismay in Seoul: Commentaries and news reports this week reveal that "the so-called government of southern Korea faces a crisis." The revelation is reportedly quoted from a NEW YORK TIMES account and, in news dispatches, is coupled with details of the manner in which the "frightened" Seoul Government "has begun sharply to suppress activities of all oppositionists." (TASS, in English Morse to the Far East, 6 October 1948) The same account is also broadcast to North American and Soviet Home audiences.

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Soviet commentators exploit Assembly dissension over the transfer-of-administrative-authority act as evidence (1) of United States greediness and imperialism and (2) of Korean awareness of and dissatisfaction with the Syngmann Rhee Government's compliance with U.S. maneuverings. Markov's 10 October commentary charges that the present administration in Seoul is helping further America's military ambitions while Alexeyev, in a Korean-language broadcast of 11 October, claims that Syngmann Rhee is begging the Americans to remain because the growing opposition is proof that he will be unable to remain in power without them.

Danilov concentrates on establishing the anti-popular aims of the Seoul Government in a Korean language commentary of 8 October. He asserts that the South Korean "puppet government" has nothing in common with the people and documents the assertion by reference to the transfer-of-authority agreement and plans for strengthening the Ministry of Home Affairs.