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WEEKLY SURVEY
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Korea

KOREA: "TERROR AND COERCION" MARKED THE "SO CALLED ELECTION"

Disparagement of the 10 May elections in the American zone is Moscow's one and only theme in broadcasts about Korea this week. Broadcasters claim that the voting was marked by force, coercion, violence, terror, etc., etc., in a patent effort to discredit the election, the United States, and the United Nations. Moscow, adhering to previous custom, makes no reference to the cutting off of power by Pyongyang authorities. Pyongyang, however, emphasizes American perfidy in reporting the "facts" of the power case.

a. "An Indecent Farce": Both Moscow and Pyongyang cite a great variety of alleged evidence in reviling the elections. Both radios contend an infinite number of times that the elections were conducted in an atmosphere of terror and coercion and are therefore invalid as an expression of Korean opinion. They report instances of citizens who were allegedly forced to the polling places "at gun point," describe the activities of American planes which "continually" flew over South Korea, and claim that in certain localities "control over elections were exercised directly by American troops."

The aftermath of the elections is treated with equal disdain. Mikhailov claims, in a commentary broadcast on 15 May, that members of the U.N. Temporary Commission on Korea have been "compelled to admit that the elections were not free" and that differences in opinion have appeared among the Commission members--differences which "are significant" because they "illustrate the fact that the anti-democratic idea of setting up a southern Korean puppet state is meeting with serious difficulties." (in Czech) PRAVDA prepares for the presumably favorable report to be prepared by the Commission by declaring that "whatever the official results of the unworthy comedy played out in South Korea...it cannot delude anyone." (in Russian to Soviet Asia, 16 May 1948) PRAVDA also demeans the election by citing the fact that the results had not yet been published "despite the fact that five days have already elapsed" since the balloting took place. The reported victory of Syngman Rhee has not yet been noted in broadcasts received here.

Soviet commentators do not confine themselves to impugning the election, however. The discussions of the election, including those by Mikhailov and Maisky and that appearing in PRAVDA, also include self-righteous reiteration of the Soviet stand on Korea with particular emphasis on the withdrawal of troops as a condition for democracy there.

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