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UNRESOLVED ISSUES IN THE RHEE-ROBERTSON TALKS

On 21 July, South Korea's Prime Minister and Foreign Minister accused the United States of bad faith in not implementing the Rhee-Robertson agreement, and threatened to repudiate the agreement and denounce the armistice.

They demanded clarification over reports that the UNC has given the Communists assurances that it would not support the ROK Army in violation of the armistice which they noted was contrary to Robertson's promises that he would seek President Eisenhower's assurances of moral and material support for unilateral South Korean attack if the political conference fails. They also stated that UNC assurances that it would protect the MROC personnel were not necessary since it was agreed that they would not have to enter Korea to administer the prisoners' repatriation.

They then inquired whether President Eisenhower has given assurances of moral and material support for a unilateral South Korean attack if the political conference fails to achieve unification and a Chinese withdrawal after 90 days.

In regard to the promised mutual security pact, South Korea's final position was for a NATO-type treaty which would recognize South Korean sovereignty to all territory south of the Yalu, and would provide that an attack is to be met "forthwith and immediately" without further congressional action.

The Foreign Minister reiterated South Korea's preference for this type rather than an alternative offered by the United States, and inquired whether they can expect favorable results. He also charged that American failure to implement the Tasca recommendations for economic aid contravenes U.S. commitments.

These points officially raised are only a few of the unreconciled issues in the Rhee-Robertson agreement which Rhee might use to repudiate the armistice.

Other possibilities:

(1) While Rhee has agreed not to obstruct the armistice up to the end of 90 days of the political conference, he qualified this by retaining his "sovereign right" to interpret his position freely and stating his agreement was valid only "so long as no measures or action taken under the armistice are detrimental to our national survival." This obviously permits him to repudiate the agreement at any time.

(2) Rhee insists that after the period of explanation the anti-Communist Koreans be released to South Korea and the Chinese sent to Formosa. This is contrary to the draft armistice agreement which calls for turning them over for an additional 30 days to the political conference, followed by their release to a "neutral nation."

(3) Rhee's position is that the United States is committed to withdraw automatically from the political conference after 90 days. He has not acknowledged the conditions which the United States has attached to such withdrawal.

(4) Rhee has agreed that ROK troops will remain under the UNC "so long as the US and the ROK pursue the same common objectives." His final letter omitted any reference to this issue.

(5) Rhee's final position was that the 20-division level agreed to by the US has almost been reached, and the target should therefore be more flexible.

(6) Neither the US nor South Korea has discussed the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission, whose inspection activities will

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- 4 -

require them to enter South Korea. In view of Hhee's objections to the Indian troops, he is not likely to consent to Czech and Polish personnel entering.