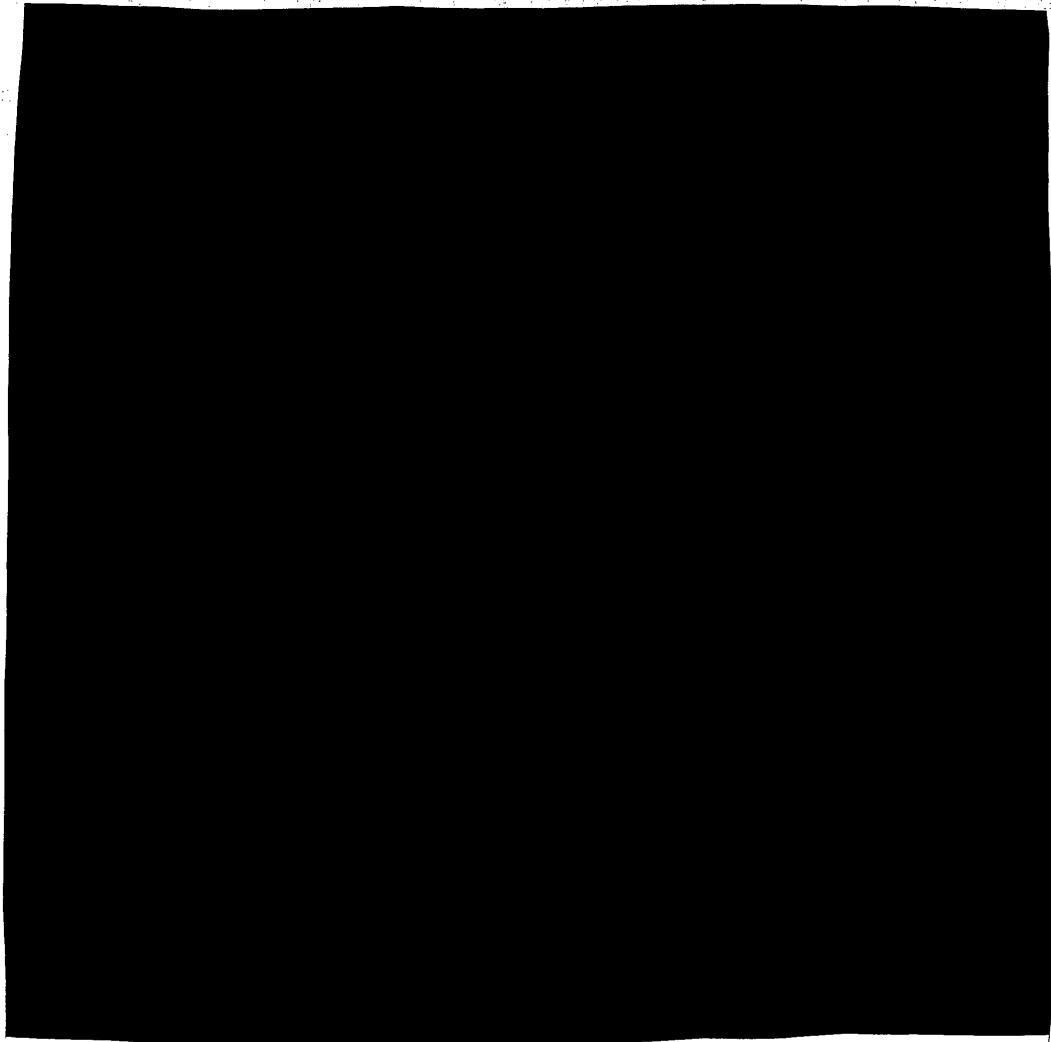


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CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY REVIEW

19 May 1960



SWEEPING SOUTH KOREAN GOVERNMENT CHANGES

South Korean Acting Chief of State Huh Chung is making sweeping personnel changes in the government, but at the same time is trying to minimize the adverse effects on government operations. There have been increasing arrests and shifts

of government personnel identified with the old regime, which has tended to mollify public opinion.

Martial law commander Lt. Gen. Song Yo-chan has warned that the government must soon

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PART II

NOTES AND COMMENTS

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stop firing police officials if the police organization's effectiveness is to be restored.

New Defense Minister Lt. General Yi Chong-chan has announced that all military commanders, including the chiefs of the three services, will be punished if they are found to have been involved in election irregularities. Yi appears to be particularly concerned over the part played in the elections by Song, who is also army chief of staff, although Yi reportedly is willing to delay punitive action until the political situation is more settled. American military observers feel that South Korea's defensive capabilities would be damaged should implementation of Yi's announcement trigger a wave of resignations and retirements of able senior officers.

Passage of a constitutional amendment greatly reducing the powers of the president and establishing a cabinet with a prime minister responsible to the legislature appears likely to be enacted about mid-June despite threats by Rhee's discredited majority Liberal party to resign from the legislature unless "illegal" retaliations

against local Liberal leaders are halted. Should the dissidents manage to hold up legislation, public disorder and violence might be renewed.

Prospects for improved relations between Seoul and Tokyo have been dimmed by Huh Chung's firm opposition to the present program for the repatriation of Koreans in Japan to North Korea. Huh has publicly warned that cessation of the program is an essential condition for a final settlement of outstanding differences, but stated that its continuation does not preclude resumption of negotiations. Subsequently, however, he "forcefully and explicitly" told Ambassador McConaughy that so long as the repatriation to North Korea continues, negotiations with Japan cannot be resumed.

Japanese officials have indicated that it is impossible for them to stop the repatriation program. Vice Foreign Minister Yamada has stated that there would be very serious repercussions if the government were to reverse its position on the right of voluntary repatriation and terminate the program. He pointed out that new estimates indicated that a total of about 100,000 Koreans may go to North Korea.