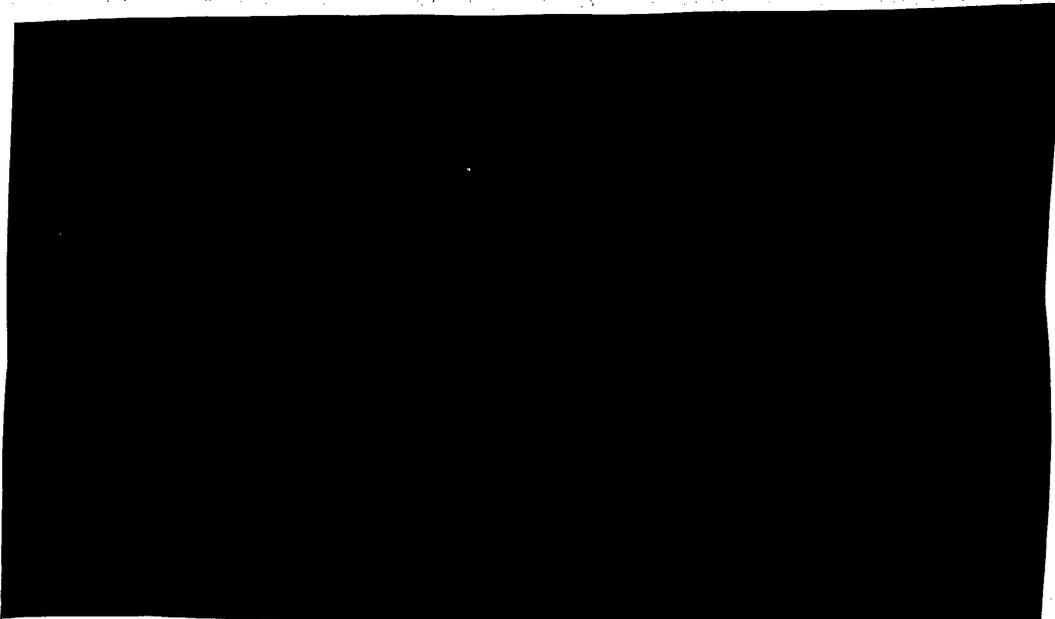


~~SECRET~~

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY SUMMARY

24 March 1960



DETERIORATING POLITICAL SCENE IN SOUTH KOREA

The widespread resentment aroused by the Rhee government's repressive and fraudulent election tactics--which resulted in serious election-day disturbances--could lead to estrangement between the government and a majority of the Korean people. There has been an increasing tendency by the regime during the past year to rely on force and repression.

Those newspapers not controlled by the government have been outspoken in their criticism of the administration's election tactics, which produced an overwhelming victory for President Rhee and his running mate, Yi Ki-pung. Large numbers of students have participated in widely scattered demonstrations. Korean youths, already disenchanted with the Rhee government, now have a group of martyrs--the students killed by police during the bloody election-day riots at the southern port city of Masan.



The Democrats are likely to take every opportunity to exploit such antigovernment feeling. The Democratic leadership has called the election "null and void," and the party's representatives have walked out of the National Assembly.

There are indications that the government is concerned and would like to bring about a relaxation of tensions. The home minister has publicly accepted responsibility for the Masan riots, and Rhee has accepted his resignation. The administration might use the traditional resignation of top ministers following a presidential election to drop or reassign

~~SECRET~~

Approved for Release

JAN 2000

b (1) b (3)

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY SUMMARY

24 March 1960

those most closely associated with the election. An extensive police shake-up also appears likely.

There is no indication, however, that dominant ele-

ments in Rhee's Liberal party have revised their intentions of monopolizing political power after Rhee's death. Such a policy could force the legitimate opposition into subversive channels. 

