

SECRET

October 17, 1950, 9 a.m.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

World Reaction to the Wake Island Meeting

The Wake Island meeting received prominent and mostly favorable coverage in the British, Western European, Indian, Nationalist Chinese, and Japanese press, according to limited preliminary reports. No reports as yet have been received from Southeast Asia, the Near East, or Latin America.

In the non-Communist world the general reaction is one of hopeful expectation that as a result of the meeting solutions to major Far Eastern problems, in addition to Korea, will be forthcoming. Characteristically each country with interests in the Far East sees in the meeting the possibility of US action favorable to its own objectives in the area. Japanese press comments concentrated on the significance of the meeting in terms of an early peace treaty. One conservative French newspaper, with Indo-China in mind, stressed the need for the immediate harmonizing of the objectives of the Western powers in the Far East. Chinese Nationalist Army sources privately interpret the meeting to mean that the US will be less adamant in restraining Nationalist action against the mainland.

Although the press in general appears to be awaiting the President's speech tonight to clarify the meeting's accomplishments, speculation seems to center on these major points:

(1) Most newspapers, except for the Chinese Nationalist press, speculate that the Administration's foreign policy views, particularly on Formosa, have been accepted by General MacArthur and accordingly US policy in the Far East will now be better coordinated. Chinese Nationalist papers studiously avoided speculation on any decisions that might adversely affect

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the Nationalist position on Formosa.

(2) Some papers, particularly in Britain, regard the President's trip as a wise political move to mend an important crack in US bipartisan foreign policy.

(3) There is general speculation that the meeting may have paved the way for the eventual admission of Communist China to the UN, a step that is regarded by some French papers as leading to a reduction of international tension. The British press also speculates on whether the US will eventually recognize Communist China with the result of improving coordination of American and British foreign policy.

(4) Speculation on the possibility of a new broad American program in the Far East is limited to parts of the French and Japanese press, which foresee the meeting as a prologue to a new US diplomatic counter-offensive.

The only non-Communist criticisms reported thus far were (a) the Manchester Guardian's comment that the President, by failing to take along a UN official, gave the impression of bypassing the UN in reaching decisions on Korea, (b) Nationalist Chinese press complaints that the meeting was too short and the communique too terse and vague, and (c) an ~~was~~ Indian editorial that said the meeting would only have significance if it reassured world opinion on US objectives in Korea and marked an end to what it called "MacArthurism" in US Far Eastern policy.

Soviet and Communist comment on the meeting has been limited. Three themes have thus far been used: (1) The meeting was designed to "expand American aggression" in the Far East; (2) The meeting destroyed the fiction that Korea is a UN affair; (3) The meeting reflected US realization of the difficulties facing it both in Korea and the rest of Asia.

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