

Justice Probes South Korean CIA

By Jack Anderson
and Les Whitten

The Justice Department is quietly investigating charges that the Korean Central Intelligence Agency, modeled after our own embattled spy agency, has terrorized Korean exiles in this country, has set up illegal front groups to manipulate American public opinion and has even tried to "buy off" members of Congress.

The charges, based on testimony of a former South Korean official, are summarized in a private letter to Attorney General Edward H. Levi from Chairman Donald Fraser (D-Minn.) of the House international organizations subcommittee.

The testimony was given by Dr. Jai Hyon Lee, who was director of information for South Korean in this country in the early 1970s. His statements were confirmed, for the most part, by Donald Ranard, the former director of Korean affairs at the State Department.

Dr. Lee, now a professor at Western Illinois University, told of a secret meeting in Seoul in March, 1973, attended by KCIA agents and subsequent briefings in Washington by the KCIA station chief about "a scheme of clandestine operations."

The secret scheme, according to Lee's testimony, was designed "to mute criticism of (President) Park's totalitarianism and to buy off its supporters in the United States." The "buy off" of congressmen, he alleged, was left to the ambassador to handle.

Lately, the KCIA agents at the embassy here have been more than doubled, Lee swore. "Park's KCIA arm is . . . stretched into the U.S.," he said, "illegally manipulating American institutions and intimidating Korean residents in this country."

Specifically, Lee accused the KCIA of intimidating American businessmen with interests in Korea, financing pro-Park activities in the United States and setting up "front groups" to praise his regime.

Lee charged that the Park government had financed a pro-Park seminar in Kalamazoo, Mich., in 1972, a Washington symposium in 1973 and another Washington rally last month.

He identified the "front groups" as the Korean newspaper Hankook Shinmoon, the Korean radio-TV broadcasting offices in Washington and various Korean Associations in Chicago, Los Angeles, New York City and San Francisco.

But far more sinister, according to Rep. Fraser's letter to the Justice Department, were Lee's charges that the KCIA is intimidating Koreans in this country.

A favorite KCIA technique, alleged Lee, is to silence vocal Koreans in the United States by threatening "their families, relatives and close friends in Korea. This has been quite effective . . . since every Korean knows the KCIA's efficient brutality."

On the West Coast, said Lee, "KCIA operatives are even extorting money from Korean residents. These Korean residents are so afraid of KCIA reprisal

that they do not dare report to the police."

The witness told about a Korean Christian scholar in the United States who allegedly was warned by trans-Pacific phone from Seoul "against an anti-Park statement" at a rally. A KCIA agent showed up at an anti-Park statement" at a rally, "accompanied by several toughs carrying eggs and bottles of tomato ketchup."

The Justice Department, following up Fraser's letter, is trying to determine whether the KCIA has violated any U.S. laws.

Footnote: A Korean embassy spokesman called the Lee and Ranard charges "all groundless." The KCIA, he said is not active in the United States, nor were there any Korean "pay offs" to congressmen, intimidation or regime-supported fronts. "This is outright, malicious slander," the spokesman said.

Indian File—Russell Means, the stormy American Indian Movement leader, already has several lifetimes of criminal charges pending against him. Now he is charged in South Dakota with conspiracy to commit murder.

But tapes made of the murdered man as he lay dying show he whispered to a deputy sheriff that Means was not even in the tavern bathroom where he was shot. And the sheriff admitted later he asked "leading and suggestive" questions at the hospital to get the victim to loop Means into the case.

The deputy also conceded he failed to show Means' photo to the victim for identification,

hold a line-up in the hospital room, take fingerprints at the scene or do routine gunpowder tests to see whether Means fired the fatal shot.

Nixon Hangover—The secrecy that soured the second Nixon administration is becoming a hallmark of the Ford days, at least in some departments.

At the Pentagon, press briefings used to be held five times a week, but now they have dropped off drastically. At Commerce, Secretary Fred Dent had 15 press conferences in 1974. His replacement, Rogers Morton, has all but suspended the practice.

Treasury Secretary William Simon and Agriculture's Earl Butz have also stayed aloof from the give-and-take of regular press conferences.

Washington Whirl—Walter Kennedy, the House minority sergeant-at-arms, used his official stationery last fall to raise funds for Rep. John McCollister (R-Neb.) McCollister won, but bit the hand that fed him, telling us that Kennedy had "made a mistake" in misusing the sergeant-at-arms' office for partisan politicking.

The Food and Drug Administration's own records show they are softening up on violators of federal health laws. In 1973, the FDA brought 1,350 legal actions against alleged offenders. In 1974, the number dropped to 523, with many court cases replaced by slap-on-the-wrist warning letters.

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