

CIA (A)

# U.S. Had Plan To Overthrow Korea's Rhee

Washington

Newly declassified documents have revealed that the United States gave high-level consideration during the Korean war to staging a coup against President Syngman Rhee of South Korea.

The plan, which called for Rhee's arrest, was known as Operation Everready. It was never activated on the two occasions it was under active study, the documents show. Rhee made concessions that, in the view of the Americans involved, made his overthrow unnecessary and undesirable.

The American military officers and diplomats who conceived the operation said before and after that they had high regard for Rhee's leadership and respected his deep anti-Communist convictions, even though they often sharply disagreed with his policies.

The documents were declassified by the Defense and State Departments at the request of a Columbia University graduate student under the Freedom of Information Act. Some documents were obtained independently by the Times.

It is well known that Rhee and his American allies often disagreed during the Korean war from 1950 to 1953, but it was not known that the U.S. had a plan for his ouster from power.

Rhee called it his life ambition to end the occupation of Korea by foreign powers and to unite the North and South. He was forced from power by his own armed forces in 1960 and died in 1965 in exile in Honolulu at the age of 90.

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