

August 14, 1953

Memorandum, President Syngman Rhee to All Diplomatic Officials

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Summary:

Following the ratification of the Armistice Agreement and the Mutual Defense Treaty, President Rhee conveys that he expects the Armistice to fail because the communists will "undoubtedly" violate it and undermine Korean independence. Rhee wants to renew war to secure victory but most importantly to strengthen the ROK-U.S alliance. Following the memorandum he makes twelve points ranging from topic like Korean rehabilitation to prisoners of war from the Korean War.

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MEMORANDUM

AUGUST 14, 1953

To: All diplomatic officials

From: The President

Now that the truce is signed and the mutual defense treaty with the United States has been initialled, our situation is different than it has been in the past and these differences should guide all our public statements.

In regard to the truce and the political conference, we expect it to fail but we must be alert to the danger that the communists will present some formula which will undermine Korean independence but do it so cleverly that the U. N. nations may accept it. Such a possibility, for example, is the suggestion for the "neutralization" of Korea, or the formation of a wholly new government, under circumstances that would permit Russia to dominate the elections in the north.

Anticipating the failure of the conference, our aim must be to engage the help of the United States in renewing our drive to the Yalu. The U. S. has already promised to do this in case the communists "violate the armistice and attack us." The communists will undoubtedly violate the armistice -- in fact they already have done so in several respects. Our function must be to show that these violations are a real reason for renewing the war to secure a victory over them.

As a matter of policy, we need to make every effort to strengthen our relationships with our Allies, and to emphasize the enmity between the Allies and the communists.

To accomplish this, we need to present as soberly and factually as we can all available evidence showing the misdeeds of the communists and their aggressive intentions. Our criticism should always be levelled against the communists, and, so far as possible, not against our Allies -- especially not against the United States, upon which we must depend for help.

cc Naks Wang Chink
Choo, Namkooang
Hongkong, Consular
Sydney, Tokyo
K P P

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Among the points to be made in public statements are the following:

1. The communists are NOT returning all prisoners, as they are pledged to do.
2. Among prisoners returned ^{are} ~~is~~ many sick and wounded, who should have been returned months ago, under the agreement to exchange sick and wounded prisoners.
3. Among the returned prisoners a great many show evidences of hunger, mistreatment, and torture -- even though the communists have been doing their best in the past several weeks to feed and care for them in order to have them looking as well as possible for the exchange.
4. A great many prisoners were murdered in cold blood by the communists.
5. A great many civilian south Koreans were driven north by the communists and have not been returned.
6. So long as a million Red Chinese aggressors remain in north Korea our nation is actually under attack. Who can say we will be protected from all future aggression if we are not protected against the very aggression now being carried on against us?
7. The communists are violating the truce in building military airfields, even though they call them "civilian." We should not let ourselves accept this fiction or pass it over as unimportant.
8. The communists are strengthening themselves militarily in every way, in violation of the armistice agreement that the strength of neither side should be built up. Evidence of this fact is from time to time carried in the public press and is well known -- but its significance must be emphasized.
9. The division of Korea was in itself an international blunder of the worst kind, and there can be no security for us and no stability in Asia until this blunder is rectified.
10. The economic rehabilitation program must develop factories and basic resources in Korea, not build up factories in Japan from which we are expected to buy the goods. The Congress appropriated the money for Us and if we hammer away on this point we can make it difficult for them to use the money to develop Japan at our expense.
11. ROK land, sea and air forces must be greatly expanded, to match the strength of the enemy in north Korea. Not to do so will be to repeat the mistake of 1948-50, when we were ^dliberately kept weaker than the enemy. Building up Korean strength will make it less necessary

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to commit American manpower to Korea. This is a basic point that must be frequently stated.

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12. The period of the political conference will be a particularly delicate time for us. We must stand so firmly by our principles that both the communists and the "neutralists" in the U. N. will know we cannot be shaken from them. At the same time, we must be careful not to sound reckless and uncooperative, for it would be fatal if the failure of the conference should be blamed upon us rather than upon the communists.

13. Our main theme should be to insist upon accomplishment of the "common objective" of a re-unified, independent, democratic Korea" as the only way to stabilize peace in Asia. The U. N. and the U. S. are pledged to this goal and we must keep it ever in the public consciousness. This pledge must not be allowed to become merely an empty phrase without meaning. Among honorable nations, pledges are made to be kept.

14. Above all, we should emphasize the closeness of the relations between Korea and the United States, and show that our interests in Asia are the same. This is important for two reasons:

- a. We want the U. S. rather than the U. N. to help us drive out the communists, for the U. N. will never agree to a strong program.
- b. We must not give the pro-Japanese elements in the Senate any excuse to vote against the Mutual Defense Treaty.

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