

May 19, 1954
Letter, John W. Staggers to Syngman Rhee

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Summary:

John W. Staggers informs Syngman Rhee of his meeting with representatives like Charles B. Brownson who is on the Committee of Government Operations and the Committee of Public Works.

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JOHN W. STAGGERS
ATTORNEY AND COUNSELLOR AT LAW
508-511 COLUMBIAN BUILDING
WASHINGTON I, D. C.

May 19, 1954

The Honorable, Dr. Syngman Rhee
President, Republic of Korea
Seoul, Korea

Dear Dr. Rhee:

Last week I wrote you in reference to my interview with Representative Paul Shafer, and that the meeting was very satisfactory insofar as he promised me that he would take no action on his resolution if it did not meet with the approval of the Korean Government. I advised him that it did not have such approval.

Following my meeting with Representative Shafer, I made an appointment with Representative Charles B. Brownson who is on the Committee of Government Operations and the Committee of Public Works. Representative Brownson together with Mr. Maurice J. Mountain and Mr. Edward C. Kennelly, Attorney for the Sub-Committee, and others, visited Korea for the purpose of investigating the situation there and reporting back to the Committee.

I met with the three of them in Mr. Brownson's office at three o'clock on Tuesday, May 18th. I was advised that they had their report ready and it would be made to the Committee on Thursday the 20th. I spent an hour and forty-five minutes going over the situation in Korea with them. I was assured the report would be modified to some extent as the result of our meeting.

Mr. Brownson said that he felt with the suggested changes, it would be very satisfactory to Korea. He assured me that he spoke only from information which he received while in Korea, but said he could not reveal the source of his information. He is now taking a more friendly attitude toward Korea, and asked me to assure you, that he would do all he could to help Korea and nothing to harm Korea.

I asked him about the speech he made, which was strong for and in behalf of Japan and the contrast about what he had to say about Korea. His answer was that, he had been asked to make a speech on Asia, and that he could not well talk on Asia without including Japan.

However, I wish to assure you, that Mr. Brownson, Mr. Mountain and Mr. Kennelly have received information from me on Korea, which has caused them to change their entire attitude. I believe we can depend on all three of them for support in the future.



The Honorable, Dr. Syngman Rhee

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Mr. Brownson informed me that the information which he had received on the development of good roads, hotel accommodations, ec cetera, was presented to him in an entirely different light than the information I had given him on the need of these improvements, which changed his point of views. I pointed out, that the road improvement alone, would save at least fifty per cent in repair expense on the rolling, moving vehicles the United States' Army now has in operation in Korea. And, the saving on the wear and tear would more than pay for any road program that might be proposed for Korea. He said that was one angle he had given no thought, but would seriously consider it.

I am to see Mr. Brownson in the next few days to discuss further with him, the suggestion made, that the appropriations be made directly to the Korean Government to be spent by them, with only a supervising committee who would be appointed by Congress and approved by the Korean Government or vice versa, appointed by the Korean Government and approved by Congress.

Also, I pointed out to both Representative Shafer and Representative Brownson, that the present operating costs in handling these funds could be reduced to where it would not cost more than three to five per cent. The difference in the operating cost would be further applied to the rehabilitation of Korea.

I will appreciate it very much, if you will give me any suggestions which you have to make in connection with this proposal that the money be appropriated and turned over directly to the Korean Government.

With kind personal regards, I am

Sincerely yours,



J. W. STAGERS

JWS:dgo

Letter No. 97

Via Diplomatic Pouch

P. S. Please find memorandum attached herewith.