THE QUEST FOR A BULWARK OF ANTI-COMMUNISM:
THE FORMATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA
ARMY OFFICER CORPS AND ITS POLITICAL
SOCIALIZATION, 1945-1950

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
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* * * * *

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<td>CCRRKI</td>
<td>Central Council for the Rapid Realization of Korean Independence [Taehan tongnip ch’oksŏng chung’ang hyŏbui-hoe]</td>
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<td>CIC</td>
<td>Counter-Intelligence Corps</td>
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<td>CINCFE</td>
<td>Commander in Chief, Far East</td>
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<td>ELS</td>
<td>English Language School</td>
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<tr>
<td>ENC</td>
<td>Emergency National Council [Pisang kungmin hoeŭi]</td>
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<td>EST</td>
<td>Eastern Standard Time</td>
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<tr>
<td>FDR</td>
<td>Franklin D. Roosevelt</td>
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<td>FRUS</td>
<td>Foreign Relations of the United States</td>
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<td>JCS</td>
<td>Joint Chiefs of Staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>KDP</td>
<td>Korean Democratic Party [Han’guk minjudang]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNP</td>
<td>Korean National Police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KMA</td>
<td>Korea Military Academy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KMAG</td>
<td>United States Military Advisory Group to the Republic of Korea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KPG</td>
<td>Korean Provisional Government [Taehan min’guk imsi chŏngbu]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG</td>
<td>Military Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCO</td>
<td>Noncommissioned Officer</td>
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<td>NPA</td>
<td>National Preparatory Army</td>
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OCS  Officer Candidate School
OTS  Officer Training School
ROK  Republic of Korea
ROKA  Republic of Korea Army
SCAP  Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers
SKIG  South Korean Interim Government
SKILA  South Korean Interim Legislative Assembly
SWNCC  State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee
USAFLK  United States Army Forces in Korea
USAPPAC  United States Army Forces, Pacific
USAMGIK  United States Army Military Government in Korea

All Korean names are given according to the McCune-Reischauer system of transliteration, except several idiomatic examples, such as Kim Koo, Syngman Rhee, Park Chung Hee, and Seoul.
INTRODUCTION

Apart from the question of whether history develops in a cyclical way or not, it seems that there are certain watersheds in a nation's history. Looking at the modern history of Korea, the years of 1910, 1945, and probably 1980 were major historical turns. In 1910 Japan annexed Korea into its empire; in 1945, after thirty-five years of Japanese colonial exploitation, the Korean people were liberated; and in 1980, after another thirty-five years, a socio-political system run by an elite of Japanese educational background disintegrated with the assassination of President Park Chung Hee.

Among these historical turning points, the year of 1945 and the subsequent five years might be the most important period in the modern history of Korea. The "five year history of liberation" was a history of struggle in which the Korean people fought to restore their national identity and to establish a new society after long dynastic despotism and subsequent foreign rule. They fought against the pressures of other foreign nations and severe ideological disruptions among themselves. It was a history of frustration
in which the Korean people's will to establish a unified, independent nation was frustrated. It was a history of calamity in which the divided Korean people were dragged into a disastrous war between themselves, in which every family lost one or more members and the whole nation burned to ashes. Moreover, the basic problems that emerged during that period (i.e., the division of the nation and ideological conflicts) have ruled the character and direction of the history of Korea up until this time. Communism and anti-Communism not only dominated the mutually hostile relationship between the two Koreas, but caused political and social turmoil inside of them. One of the major reasons of the military coup d'état in 1961, for instance, might be the military leaders' intense anti-Communist attitudes. General Park Chung Hee, the leader of the coup, expressed well the coup's anti-Communist character:

Compromise with the Communist Party is the beginning of defeat. It must be remembered that the advocacy of territorial unification with the society in a state of chaos, as it was under the Chang regime, is the way to national suicide. Theories about unifying the country under neutralism, such as those loudly proposed by the students, provide the opportunity for a bloodless Communist coup d'état. We must defend to the last the democracy and freedom that we now enjoy.\(^1\)

\(^1\) Park Chung Hee, Our Nation's Path: Ideology of Social Reconstruction (Seoul: Tong'a Ch'ulp'ansa, 1962), p.192. The number one slogan of the so-called Revolutionary Pledge was that of "Set up anti-Communism as the number one motto of the national policy...."
What were the causes of the dynamics in the "five year history of liberation" that could frustrate the Korean people's long-dreamed hope of the "unified and independent" motherland? In the first place it was the Cold War in which two, big antagonistic powers stand face to face on the Korean peninsula and, as a result, the "temporary" dividing line along the thirty-eighth parallel created two ideologically insoluble Koreas. Next, there were deep rooted politico-ideological disruptions and antagonisms among the Korean leaders throughout the period. That kind of disintegration provided the opportunities for militant political groups in the North and the South to move toward the "separate governments," taking advantage of the Cold War. In some sense they might have been the clever ones who quickly realized and exploited the international rivalry over the Korean peninsula, the pressures that would eventually produce the two Koreas.

However, the whole story of that period is too complex for any single work to cover completely. That is the reason why this study will examine the period through a special mirror--military affairs. Military affairs should

\[2\] Disintegration and antagonism between the Nationalists and the Communists was one of the major reasons why there was no unified and single leadership system during the anti-Japanese independence movements since the early 1920s. In fact, Korea has the oldest history of Communist movements in Asia. See Dae-sook Suh, The Korean Communist Movement, 1918-1948 (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1967), Chapter 1.
make it easier to grasp the overall picture of the period. Through the circumstances of this century the Korean people went through a unique experience in their military affairs. Their armed forces were disbanded by the Japanese and recreated by the Americans in the same way as their nation. They lost their country because of their lack of proper defense forces. And they could not direct their own fate after the liberation because the liberation came about mainly by foreign hands, not by a successful resistance movement. The Korean people came to realize that the liberation was not independence and that they could not achieve their complete independence without a military ability to guarantee their nation's sovereignty. Even though they struggled ceaselessly for independence in their own way, the Korean people could not play a significant role in the Allies' general war effort. Other foreign masters came in and built armed forces and governments on both sides for their own purposes. The emergence and the development of the Republic of Korea Army officer corps, the nucleus of the Army, was a mirror of its mother society of the time. In this sense, a "military history" seems to fit nicely to understand the "five year history of liberation" of Korea.

Keeping in mind this premise, this study follows four major themes. First, the Korean Army and its officer corps were basically the products of the Americans, especially of
the United States Army Military Government in Korea (USAMGIK). The major causes and processes of the creation of the Korean Army officer corps reflected American policy toward Korea: The Americans wanted to build a bulwark in South Korea in order to stem the Communism (especially Soviet expansion) in the Northeast Asia. As a result, the Korean Army officer corps was formed on the special politico-ideological basis of anti-Communism from its early stages.

Second, during the period from 1946 to 1950, the mecca of the Korean Army officer corps was the Officer Training School (OTS). Except for one hundred and ten graduates of the English Language School (ELS), the forerunner of the OTS, every officer was commissioned through the OTS. It was the place in which officer candidates of various backgrounds in terms of former military careers, ages, and social stratifications learned new standards as the new army’s cadres. Although there were a lot of problems and weaknesses in their training, what they learned at the OTS became the basis of their service expertise and, more importantly, provided a new professional/ethical basis (i.e., anti-Communism) for their cohesion. Thus, in the early period of the Korean Army, the OTS became the cradle of the officer corps both in name and reality.

Third, the domination of Japanese Army veterans in the formation of the Korean Army officer corps was overwhelm-
ing. In fact, former officials of the Japanese Governor-General dominated the structure of the bureaucracy of the American Military Government, including the police. Therefore, the phenomenon of the Japanese Army veterans' leadership in the Korean Army officer corps was merely a part of a common pattern in the American Military Government's bureaucratic system. It was caused primarily by the American occupation authorities and partly by the Korean themselves. The lack of preparation for the occupation of Korea, the occupation authorities' political inexperience in dealing with occupation affairs, the American desire to maintain order in their politico-ideological schemes in order to counter the already strong Leftist movements in South Korea, and the "opportunistic atmosphere" in which a number of Korean conservatives changed their banners from "pro-Japanese" to "pro-American" and "anti-Communist." These factors made it possible for the former bureaucrats and their supporters to take the opportunity to dominate the liberated Korean society. The American Military Government needed their administrative experience and, in turn, they badly needed to protect their vested interests that could be guaranteed by the new ruling authority. One can easily understand why the dominant Japanese Army veterans eventually influenced the Korean Army officer corps' anti-Communist ideological orientation, for Japan was the
strongest anti-Communist power in Asia before its defeat and its Army was the cutting edge of its anti-Communism.

Fourth and finally, even though the anti-Communist ideological orientation of the Korean Army officer corps primarily was the product of the American policy in Korea, the Korean political and military elite also played a significant role to the result. President Syngman Rhee was the well-known ultra anti-Communist, and he desperately needed anti-Communist ideology for the cohesion and political legitimacy of his regime in South Korea. President Rhee, a political genius, also perceived that the ultimate source of political power was in the military, especially in a newly born nation. He heavily favored strong anti-Communist generals, especially those who came from North Korean provinces. His ideological control over the military was a typical example of third world civil-military relations. The military leadership itself urgently needed the anti-Communist ideology as the new professional/ethical basis for its own cohesion and legitimacy. It was an inevitable step for the former Japanese Army veterans to seek a new ethical base for their new profession. Fortunately, the reckless Leftist rebellions in the southern provinces and a series of army mutinies initiated by Communist soldiers in 1948 and 1949 gave them the momentum to legitimize their leadership. Through the counterinsurgency campaigns and the
cleanup procedures in the Army, the army elite solidified the anti-Communist value system. The anti-Communist ideological orientation of the Korean Army officer corps, therefore, was the result not only of the American occupation policy but of the Korean Army leaders' effort to set up a new ethical basis for their profession.

To examine and clarify the major themes, this study includes six main chapters. The first chapter deals with the problem of the division of the Korean Peninsula as a general background of the study. There was, in fact, a high amount of speculation in the early period right after the liberation both in public and in academic circles in Korea that the division stemmed from a "secret agreement" among the leaders of the Allies, especially between the United States and the Soviet Union, during World War II. However, they could produce only some circumstantial evidence that supported their arguments.

In recent years, the American official histories and published documents concerning the issue have explained that the decision for division was made during the final days of the war in a temporary and impromptu way. This interpretation of the so-called "military expedient" relies on some released official records and assessments rendered by the key figures directly involved in the decision-making process. Most of current scholarly works on this issue
unanimously agree with the official explanation that the division stemmed from a hectic "final-days" decision-making process, not from secret bargaining during the war leaders' conferences. Nevertheless, this writer still has a strong suspicion that the official and "unanimously agreed" explanation has too many unacceptable assumptions even though this writer's conviction also could not escape from the level of the circumstantial evidence. Whether it stemmed from a impromptu decision or from a pre-existing secret agreement, however, the division of the Korean peninsula became the ultimate source of the socio-political "evils" that have dominated and affected every sphere of the lives of the Korean people, including the military profession.

The second chapter, dealing with the evolution of American policy toward Korea during 1945-1950, will describe one of the two thematic pillars of the anti-Communistic ideopolitical socialization process of the ROK Army officer corps. The traditional historiography on the post war policy of the United States toward Korea argues that there was "no scent of containment," at least before the year of 1948. Nominally, this view may be true. However, it may not be true. From a very early stage of the occupation the American Military Government authorities had to deal with strong Leftist movements such as the People's Republic and, therefore, tried to check the Leftist organizations. It
endorsed the activism of the conservatives. While the Washington authorities were looking for a multilateral trusteeship as a viable means to prevent the overall Soviet domination over the peninsula, the occupation authorities at the scene were struggling with the Leftist movements. As a result, the occupation authorities overwhelmingly favored the conservatives over the Leftists in filling the government offices, strengthening the Korean national police, and hastening the creation of a Korean armed forces. With increasing Rightist power in the American occupation zone and the reverse situation in the North, there was no way for the two occupation forces to negotiate the formation of a unified and independent Korea that might turn over control to the opposite side. Since the later part of 1947, therefore, the United States switched its policy from a trusteeship to a separate government for South Korea to meet the already-active Soviet policy that fortified North Korea along socialist lines. The change also preceded American withdrawal from Korea. But it was not a "leaving behind none" movement, but a clear intention that Americans would build a solid bulwark against Communism that meant a self-sustaining, pro-American native government supported by its own defense forces and by American economic and military aid. That kind of relatively "inexpensive containment" seemed to be the only way available for American pol-
icy makers to pursue a "Europe First" policy with the restricted resources of money and manpower in the postwar period. This study will label this policy as "backdoor containment." In short, the ROK Army officer corps' anti-Communist orientation reflected an American policy that aimed at the restriction of Soviet expansion in the Far East.

During this period, under the direction of the American Military Government and the successive Rightist Korean Government, the ROK Army officer corps was recreated and remodeled itself along the lines of the American military educational system and doctrine. It meant that officers came to espouse the politically conservative value system, i.e., anti-Communism, through the socio-political system in which they lived and the education they received. The next three chapters largely focus on the formation of the Korean armed forces and military educational systems.

The third chapter will describe the establishment of the Korean armed forces. At first the occupation authorities tried to form a regular armed forces. But the Washington authorities opposed it because they did not want to risk a misunderstanding with the Soviets. Thus the occupation authorities transferred to the plan of establishing a constabulary force to support the police. Even though the Korean constabulary started as the reserve force for the
police in quelling the leftist violences, the occupation authorities and the Koreans who participated in the plan regarded the constabulary as the parent body of the future Korean national defense system. In this process, those who had Japanese military background emerged as the dominant elite group in the military system, largely due to the American favoritism for "the experienced." This chapter also examines some problems and weaknesses of the constabulary.

Chapters IV and V will explain how the various officer candidates merged as the cadres of the new army at the English Language School (ELS) and the successor Officer Training School (OTS). First of all, it will show the diversity of the social and military background of the potential officer candidates. This diversity included various anti-Japanese guerrilla forces, veterans who served in the Chinese armed forces on either the Nationalist or Communist sides, and veterans of the Imperial Japanese Army and the Manchukuo Army. The very unique colonial experiences of the Korean people under the Japanese rule deprived them of Korean identities such as language, traditional cultures, and even family names. The military activities of the Korean people reflected national fragmentation: Some Koreans joined the Japanese armed forces or the puppet Manchukuo Army; some simply went into a third nation's armed
forces like the Chinese Army. There were still thousands of die-hard anti-Japanese fighters such as the Tongnip [Independence] Army, the Kwangbok [Restoration] Army, and other various guerrilla forces. After the liberation, all these soldiers became the potential pool of cadres for the new Korean armed forces.

In early December 1945, when the American Military Government established the English Language School, there were no Korean armed forces. But the occupation authorities already foresaw the necessity of a Korean army to curb internal disorder and to assume the eventual national defense in the future. Even though it was a language school in name, producing some interpreters to ease the language barriers between Americans and Koreans, the ELS was virtually a military school. The candidates had to have former military careers to be eligible, and most of its curriculum was military.

The OTS, replacing the ELS on May 1, 1946, was the first military school of its kind both in name and reality that produced the officers for the newly established Korean Constabulary. Moreover, it was the only institution which produced officers up to 1950 when a Korean version of the American OCS system emerged. The OTS produced ten regular and two special classes during its opening between 1946 and 1950. Its educational term fluctuated from four weeks (for
the First Class) to one year (for the Tenth Class), with a standard six-month course that most classes took. Japanese
and the Manchukuo Army veterans dominated the first four
classes and the predecessor ELS class, while the majority
of the next three classes of young civilians were refugees
from North Korea. These trends clearly indicate a high lev-
el of anti-Communist sentiment among the early classes.
Furthermore, the military doctrines and leadership princi-
ples taught were American. One of the major themes of the
spiritual guidance, the most important part of a confucian
society's elite education system, was anti-Communist
nationalism. The OTS was the only institution which pro-
duced officers in the early period, and its educational
atmosphere was anti-Communist. Therefore, the OTS was the
transmitter of political socialization of the ROK Army
officer corps in its early days.

The sixth chapter will explain the pattern of civil-
military relationships of the early Rhee Administration and
its impact on the anti-Communist political orientation of
the Korean army leadership. When he returned to Korea in
October 1945, from several decades of exile, Dr. Syngman
Rhee had no political base in terms of an organized politi-
cal party even though he received almost unanimous, vocal
support from both Rightist and Leftist groups. Dr. Rhee was
so famous as a legendary patriot that every political group
offered him its leadership in order to take advantage of his popularity. At first he had an ambitious plan to unite all Rightist and Leftist groups and to become an uncontro-versial consensus leader. But it was virtually impossible for him to reconcile and unite these groups. Dr. Rhee realized that he needed his own party or at least a firmer and more stable relationship with the leading parties already in business. He came to cooperate with the Korean Democratic Party (KDP), the leading Rightist political party in South Korea. There were several reasons that Dr. Rhee bet his political future on the KDP. The KDP was the richest party in terms of political funds and included most of the rich people including businessmen, bankers, and landlords; the KDP was the closest political group to the American Military Government, for KDP members and their supporters occupied almost every key position in the bureaucratic system, including the powerful Korean National Police; and the KDP’s political doctrines of capitalism, pro-Americanism, and anti-Communism fit Dr. Rhee’s own political philosophy. In the meantime, the KDP badly needed Dr. Rhee, the most popular patriot, in its leadership position in order to evade the criticism that its fortunes came from its collabor-ation with the Japanese.

After he gained political power, however, President Rhee deserted the KDP and tried to build direct control over the
police and army, the ultimate source of power in the new Republic. The appointment and dismissal of key military officers became a matter of the personal loyalty to the President. President Rhee favored strong anti-Communist military figures, especially the ones who had the northern provincial origins, in order to build a strong ideological cohesion and legitimacy in both the army and his regime to meet the most critical enemy—the Communist regime in the North. In this process, the army leadership not only became more powerful in its relationship with the civilian political leadership, but also made themselves the vanguard of anti-Communist political ideas.

This chapter will also examine the Leftist rebellions and their impact on the political socialization of the army leadership. From the beginning days of the armed forces, in fact, the military leaders were very active in adopting the anti-Communist ideology as the professional and ethical basis for its legitimacy and cohesion. They did that not only to cope with the political demands but also to change their image from that of pro-Japanese collaborators to the nation's bulwark against Leftist dangers. Rebellions of the politically frustrated Leftists under the American Military Government and the consecutive Rhee regime gave the army leadership the opportunity to legitimize its position. In the Rebellions of Yosu-Sunch'on and Taegu, closely coop-
erating with their cells in the army units stationed at the
regions, the Communists killed numerous innocent people and
recklessly destroyed citizens’ houses and property. Their
treatment of the families of the soldiers and the govern-
ment officials was even more ruthless. They made similar
mistakes in the prolonged guerrilla activities in the Chiri
Mountains and on Cheju Island. Even though there were also
several cases of cruel actions on the side of the suppress-
ing forces, the public turned their backs to the Commu-
nists. As the rebellions broke out, the incidents threw
light upon the whole picture of the Communist activities
inside the Army. Thousands were arrested and court-
martialed. Hundreds escaped and deserted from the Army to
go to North Korea or to the guerrilla forces. After the
middle of 1949, there were no significant challenges from
Communists in the Army. The army leadership could solidify
their anti-Communist political orientation through the
counterinsurgency operations and the purges of dissident
soldiers. In retrospect, it was very fortunate that the
South Korean Government faced Leftist rebellions and army
mutinies in the pre-Korean War period. Had the Communists
concealed themselves in the Army and fought together with
their civilian supporters in the rear at the time of North
Korea’s invasion, the South Korean Army might have been
collapsed before the United States and other United Nations’ forces arrived.
In conclusion, the process of political socialization of the Korean Army Officer Corps in the pre-Korean War period, typically characterized by the anti-Communist ideological orientation, reflects the influence of the following four major factors. First, the occupation policy of the American Military Government and the "containment policy" at large vis-à-vis the Soviet Union in the early period of the Cold War determined the path of the politics in liberated Korea. The ROK Army, established by the American Military Government, reflected the politico-ideological ideas of the time, which stressed the anti-Soviet, anti-Communist value system. Second, the military school system which educated and commissioned the Army cadres was one of the major schemes that induced the graduates to a certain political outlook. Actually, the OTS educational environment was replete with anti-Communism. Third, after the Korean government was established, the anti-Communist ideology appealed to the Korean political leadership in terms of its legitimacy and cohesion. And the military leadership not only accepted President Rhee's ultra anti-Communism, but also actively sought this ideology for its professional and ethical reasons. Fourth and finally, the Leftist rebellions and the related Army mutinies solidified the ROK Army Officer Corps' anti-Communist posture. If it is true that armed forces mirror the society of the time, the ROK Army officer
corps really was a showcase. It learned anti-Communist political thought and adopted it as the foundation of its professional and ethical values. Thus, it became an uncompromising bulwark of anti-Communism.

Yet this study covers only half of the history of Korea of the times. There should be another half on the North side. Through combining those two stories, we could understand how Korea became divided, how the two Koreas fortified their uncompromising postures, and how they entered a mutually disastrous war. That, this writer believes, might be the first step in sewing the estrangement between the two Koreas and thereby accomplish "one Korea."
CHAPTER I
THE DIVISION OF THE KOREAN PENINSULA

"A bystanding shrimp gets its back cracked in a fight between whales." -- Korean Proverb.

The division of Korea in 1945 has had the one most profound evil effect on modern Korean history. It tore apart a country which had tens of hundred years of homogeneity. It created two Koreas, which formed along the two antagonistic ideological social structures of the times. Like a rain front developed as warm air and cold air clash, the confrontation of the two superpowers in the Korean peninsula created the mutually insoluble atmosphere the Korean War in 1950. Without the arrangement of the superpowers, there would have not been the two Koreas. Without the two Koreas, there would have been no Korean War.¹

¹ Recently some scholars argue that the real origin of the Korean War was inside Korean society as a form of "class struggle." They interpret the Korean War as a civil war which already started right after the liberation from Japan in 1945 in terms of peasant rebellion, labor strike, and guerrilla warfare particularly below the 38th parallel. The most salient is Bruce Cumings, The Origins of the Korean War (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1981). See also John Merrill, "Internal Warfare in Korea, 1948-1950: The Local Setting of the Korean War," in Child of Conflict: The Korean-American Relationship, 1945-1953, ed. by Bruce Cumings (Seattle: Univ. of Wash-
This chapter examines the division of Korea as a general background of this study. The division was the basic setting for the political socialization process of the Korean army officer corps, based on the anti-Communism. Without due emphasis on the division and its origin, it is hard to answer the main question: How did the ideological confrontation between the Communist North and the anti-Communist South came about? Yet the interpretation of how and why the United States and the Soviet Union arrived at this decision is not so simple to describe.

There might be two main interpretations on this issue. The first one is the interpretation of the "impromptu decision" which relies on the released official records and assessments; and the other one is the explanation of "secret agreement" which was rumored and, thus, based on no more than some circumstantial evidence. According to the former, which is the American official interpretation and the accepted theory of the current scholarship, the division was made during the final days of the Pacific War in order to fix responsibility between the United States and the Soviet Union for carrying out the surrender of the Japanese troops in Korea. The latter, in the meantime, argues that the division was already agreed upon by the leaders of the Allies at the wartime conferences, either at Yalta or

Potsdam, under certain political considerations such as the sphere of influence between the major powers. The explanation of the "impromptu decision" will be examined in a critical manner, and then some assumptions for the possibility of the secret agreement will be suggested.

A. THE INTERPRETATION OF THE "IMPROMPTU DECISION"

The first official recognition of the division of Korea appeared in the General Order No. 1, promulgated by General MacArthur on September 2, 1945.\(^2\) It provided that all Japanese forces north of the 38th parallel would surrender to Soviet commanders, while those south of that line would surrender to American commanders.

According to an official historian of the United States Army, the Policy Section of the Strategy and Policy Group in the War Department Operations Division drafted the initial version of General Order No. 1. Members of the Policy Section began work late at night on August 10, 1945, when Japanese collapse was imminent. They had to decide as quickly as possible to include both provisions for splitting up the entire Far East for the surrender and for defi-

nitions of the geographical limits of those zones. The official account of the decision-making process of Korea's division reads as follows:

The Chief of the Policy Section, Colonel Charles H. Bonesteel, had thirty minutes ... for the Joint Staff Planners and the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee were impatiently awaiting the result of his work. Colonel Bonesteel thus somewhat hastily decided who would accept the Japanese surrender .... Bonesteel's prime consideration was to establish a surrender line as far north as he thought the Soviets would accept .... At first Bonesteel had thought of surrender zones conforming to the provincial boundary lines. But the only map he had in his office was hardly adequate for this sort of distinction. The 38th Parallel, he noted, cut Korea approximately through the middle .... It would place Seoul ... in American hands .... Thus he decided to use the 38th Parallel as a hypothetical line dividing the zones within which Japanese forces in Korea would surrender to appointed American and Russian authorities.3

This initial draft went through the Chief of the Strategy and Policy Group, Brigadier General George A. Lincoln, to the Joint Staff Planners who were meeting in an all-night session on August 10-11, 1945. Between 11 and 14 August, the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee (SWNCC) and the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) discussed revision of

3 Quoted in James F. Schnabel, Policy and Direction : The First Year(Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1972), p. 9. General J. Lawton Collins also related entirely the same story. But the only difference is that, in Collins' story, Major Dean Rusk was another key figure in drafting the initial version of the order with Bonesteel. Collins, War in Peacetime : The History and Lessons of Korea(Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1969), pp. 25-26n. For Rusk's own statement, which includes the very same story as the above ones, see Dean Rusk Memorandum, 12 July 1950, FRUS, 1945, VI, p. 1039.
the General Order No. 1 to the satisfaction of the heads of the State, War, and Navy Departments. On August 15, 1945, clean copies of the draft reached President Truman, and he approved it within a few hours. This channel was the same as for all important military policy papers in 1945.\textsuperscript{4} During those hectic days of emergency there were virtually no actions, through the aforementioned channel, to change the initial draft of the 38th parallel division that was originated by a colonel and a major.\textsuperscript{5}

On August 15, at the same time of his approval, President Truman directed that the General Order No. 1 be sent to the Soviet and British governments for their comments and approval. The JCS also telegraphed the general order to General MacArthur. Even though he asked several modifications, including a proposal of the Soviet occupation of the northern half of Hokkaido, Stalin never offered any objection to the 38th parallel issue in his replying telegraph on August 16. Stalin tacitly acquiesced to the American


\textsuperscript{5} Ibid. A prominent specialist on this issue speculates that the initial scenario of the division, drafted in an emergency situation by the lower level decision-making agency, was approved by the higher decision-makers without enough discussions and considerations. Once it had been decided, there was not enough time to change the original draft in the way of executions of the decision. See Cho Soon Sung, "Han'guk pundan ūi kiwŏn [The Origin of the Korean Division]," in \textit{Han'guk hyŏndae-sa [A Modern Korean History] I. 1945-1950}, ed. Ch'oe Jang-jip (Seoul: Yŏrum-sa, 1985), pp. 64-110.
proposal of the surrender zones in Korea.\textsuperscript{6}

What, then, is the background of the impromptu decision? On the motives of this decision, there might have been two different explanations—the "military expedient" viewpoint and the "political motive" viewpoint.

American official records, accounts, and testimonies of the involved officials consistently stress that the motive of the division was one of military expedient and administrative convenience, and that the division was to be temporary. In March 1947, Assistant Secretary of State John H. Hilldring made the most typical statement of those motives as follows:

In no sense was this agreement more than a military expedient between two friendly powers .... The line of demarcation was intended to be temporary and only to fix responsibility between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. for carrying out the Japanese surrender. Nevertheless, now, nearly 18 months later, this artificial and temporary line still stands like a stone wall against the unification of Korea.\textsuperscript{7}

Hugh Borton, Chief, Division of Japanese Affairs, Department of State, already provided a similar account as early as December 1946:

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\textsuperscript{7} A Speech before the Economic Club of Detroit, Michigan, 10 March 1947. \textit{Department of State Bulletin}, 23 March 1947, p. 545.
Originally that was a military division.... It was made to assist us and our allies, the Russians, in fighting the Japanese in Korea. But they surrendered before we got there and the military division stuck and became a political one.\footnote{Broadcast over NBC, 7:00 P.M., E.S.T., 28 December 1946. Quoted in E. Grant Meade, American Military Government in Korea (New York: King's Crown Press, Columbia University, 1951), p. 91.}

Secretary of State, James F. Byrnes, also supported the "military expedient" standpoint as saying that "for purposes of military operations the occupation of Korea was divided north and south of latitude 38 into Soviet and American areas.\footnote{The statement of Secretary Byrnes, Department of State Bulletin, 30 December 1945, p. 1035. See also James F. Byrnes, Speaking Frankly (New York: Harper and Bros., 1947), pp. 221-222.} Two other responsible officials in the State Department provided the very same accounts in their testimony before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs in 1947.\footnote{For the details on the testimonies of James Webb, Under Secretary of State, and John M. Allison, Deputy Director of the Office of Far Eastern Affairs in the State Department, see U.S. Congress, House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Korean Aid (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1949), Hearings before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, 81st Congress, 1st session, pp. 118-119.} President Truman himself testified in his memoirs that the demarcation line was proposed by the United States "as a practical solution when the sudden collapse of the Japanese War machine created a vacuum in Korea.\footnote{Harry S. Truman, Years of Trial and Hope (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., 1956), Memoirs, Vol.II, p. 317.}
Was the 38th-parallel decision based entirely on military considerations, to accept the Japanese surrender? Those American official records and accounts implicitly contain a logic of justification of the 38th-parallel decision as follows: Since the United States and the Soviet Union already agreed to impose a multilateral trusteeship in Korea, the United States proposed the division purely upon the operational convenience to accept the Japanese surrender and, after that operation, it expected a Soviet-American joint control would be established throughout the peninsula. However, the Soviet Union declined to cooperate in establishing a unified administration throughout Korea; therefore, the original military division eventually became a political one. In other words, the American officials who insisted on the military expedient standpoints of the division were trying to avoid or, at least, to minimize the American responsibilities of the tragic results of the decision that they proposed.

In the meantime, most of the current scholarship on this issue argues that behind the 38th-parallel decision there were certain political motives such as stemming the Soviet expansion in the Far East. Even though they admit the decision was made in an impromptu way during the final days of the Pacific War, current researchers agree almost unanimously on the "political motive" viewpoint. Soon Sung Cho
(Cho Sun-sung), one of the leading scholars on this issue, argues that the primary objective of the American proposal was to prevent Soviet occupation of the entire peninsula, which would have been a great threat to Japanese security under American control. 12

Bruce Cumings in his remarkable study on the origins of the Korean War adopts a similar viewpoint. According to Cumings, from late 1943 on, State Department planners expressed their worries that a Korea entirely in hostile hands (apparently the Soviets) would be a threat to America's Pacific security. The postwar status of Korea, they argued, rested on political and strategic considerations. Politically, Korea would be a buffer area for the interesting major powers; and strategically it would be an out-post for the defense of Japan. Therefore, they advocated partial or full military occupation of Korea in order to assure an American voice in handling postwar great power conflicts over the peninsula. Their nationalistic standpoints, however, could not win over President Franklin D. Roosevelt's internationalistic viewpoints in foreign policy, which advocated a multilateral trusteeship arrangement for Korea.

12 Soon Sung Cho, Korea in World Politics, 1940-1950: An Evaluation of American Responsibility (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), p. 56. In his later study, however, Cho rather emphasizes the "military expedient" standpoints as saying that the military considerations in terms of receiving the Japanese surrender was the prime objective of the 38th-parallel decision. See Cho, "The Origin of the Korean Division," p. 99.
But after the inauguration of President Truman their viewpoints of confrontation against the Soviets came to be the real policy for the Korean peninsula and the partition along the 38th parallel emerged. This result was the product of harmonization between the political desire of State Department planners who wished the dividing line to be as far north as possible and the obvious reluctance of the military leaders, who argued limitations on the ability of the American forces to reach the area.\textsuperscript{13} Cumings makes it clear in his "political motive" view that: "Relating the decision 'only' to the acceptance of the Japanese surrender (the official American apology for the actions since 1945) obscures what was, in fact, the point: the developing power relationship in East Asia was contingent on who received the surrender and where ...."\textsuperscript{14}

Likewise, from the thorough examinations of the released American foreign policy records during WWII, John Lewis Gaddis insists that it seems unlikely the American proposal to divide the Korean Peninsula was purely a matter of administrative convenience.\textsuperscript{15}


\textsuperscript{14} Cumings, Origins of the Korean War, p. 122.

\textsuperscript{15} John Lewis Gaddis, "Korea in American Politics, Strat-
inations been dominant. Gaddis argues, "no line at all
would have been drawn," and Korea would have been left to
Soviet occupation. 16 There are several more studies, both
in English and Korean, which intend to minimize the amount
of territory to come under Soviet hands. 17

Looking carefully at the official interpretations of the
division, in actuality, there are also certain indications
implicitly or explicitly that the political motive was
involved in the decision-making process of the division.
Schnabel, for instance, wrote that Colonel Bonesteel's
problem was to compose a surrender arrangement which, while
acceptable to the Russians, would at the same time "prevent

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egy, and Diplomacy, 1945-50," in The Origins of the Cold
War in Asia, eds. Yonosuke Nagai and Akira Iriye (Tokyo:
University of Tokyo Press, 1977), pp. 277-278.

16 Ibid., p. 278.

17 See Leland M. Goodrich, Korea: A Study of U.S. Policy in
the United Nations (New York: Council on Foreign Rela-
tions, 1956), pp. 12-13 ; Jon Halliday, "The United
Gabriel Kolko, The Politics of War: The World and United
States Foreign Policy, 1943-1945 (New York: Random
House, 1968), pp. 602-604; Joyce and Gabriel Kolko, The
Limits of Power: The World and United States Foreign
277; Kim Hak-jun, "Sampalsŏn hoekhŭng e kwanhan non-
jaeng ŭi punsŏk [An Analysis of the Debates on the 38th
Parallel Decision]," Han'guk Ch'ŏngch'ihakhoe-bo [Journal
of the Korean Political Science Institution], No. 10
(1976), pp. 323-324; Im Hong-bin, "Hanbando Pundan ŭi
puri [Roots of the Division of the Korean Peninsula],"
Sin-Tong'a [New East Asia], August 1983, pp. 186-201;
and Han Chŏng-il, "Migungjong Samnyŏn ŭl p'yŏngkahanda
[To Appraise the Three Years of the American Military
Government]," Sin-Tong'a [New East Asia], September
them from seizing all of Korea." 18 Dean Rusk recalled that he and Bonesteel proposed the 38th parallel because they felt it important "to include the capital of Korea in the area of responsibility of American troops." 19 If the division were temporary and a joint Allies administrative arrangement throughout the peninsula were to be followed soon after the separated occupations, as the American official interpretation pretended, why was it so important to include Seoul in the area of the American occupation zone? Without a political rationale behind the decision, this cannot be understood at all.

Even though they unanimously point out the "political motive" behind the 38th-parallel division, interestingly enough, virtually no one among the current scholars has dared to challenge the interpretation of the "impromptu decision." Some studies even strengthen this viewpoint by explaining why the decision was so delayed until the final days. William W. Stueck Jr. argues that President Roosevelt and his State Department officials tended to avoid conflict on difficult problems by ignoring them for as long as possible. 20 Korean problems may belong among these difficult

18 Schnabel, Policy and Direction, p. 9.

19 Dean Rusk Memorandum, 12 July 1950, FRUS, 1945, VI, p. 1039.

issues. Or, they were so minor as to be discussed at the conference table of Allies leaders. Thus, the decisive clarification of the Korean issue was delayed until the final days of the Pacific War. Mark Paul more specifically focuses on the period of the Truman administration. After the death of FDR, according Paul, Truman and his advisors, who had long wanted a firmer policy toward the Soviet Union, moved rapidly toward a diplomatic confrontation. Yet despite the anxieties in Washington over the prospects for Soviet-American cooperation, the American determination to stand up more forcefully to Soviet demands, and the possibility that the Soviets would seek to control Korea, American leaders made "no efforts to clarify the terms of the Korean trusteeship." The Truman administration, less confident that Russian ambitions in Asia were limited, thus gradually turned to "a policy of delaying" any settlement of Korean issues until the United States was in a stronger position to resist Soviet claims and to pursue its own interests. Therefore, the Korean decision


21 Meade, American Military Government in Korea, p. 47. See also, Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, p. 317.


was postponed by the date of the Atomic bombs dropped.

B. THE EXPLANATION OF THE "SECRET AGREEMENT"

Considering the political motives behind the decision, one might suspect that the division of the Korean peninsula might have based on a secret Soviet-American agreement long before the official "mid-August days" in 1945. Actually there was a widely publicized rumor in the liberated Korea that the division was determined by secret Soviet-American bargaining, which was proposed by the Russians. At the time the Moscow Accords were publicized in late December 1945, for instance, a short satiric song had quickly spread all over the Korean peninsula: "Soryo ne sokohimara, Migug-uli michimara, Ilboni ironanda" [Don't be deceived by the Soviets, Don't believe the Americans, Watch the Japanese reviving]. This song, with three pairs of words rhymed beautifully in Korean pronunciation (notice the accented part), revealed not only a strong suspicion over the Soviet-American intention of the division but also anxiety about the future of the Korean people.

It is amazing, though, that virtually no serious scholars has raised the question of the "secret agreement" for the Korean division, both in Korea and the United States.

Only once, in early 1955, were there heated debates on this issue between the two prominent Korean scholars through the newspaper columns. Yi Yong-huí, in his arguments against the so-called "military expedient" theory supported by Cho Hyo-wôn, raised several questions about the basic hypotheses of the theory. Were there any political motives, in the 38th parallel decision, other than those of receiving the Japanese surrender? Why and how were there no discussions or agreements on the Korean division during the Yalta or Potsdam Conferences? It was unreasonable to say that there was no such a kind of agreement, according to Yi, considering the fact that there was actual agreement on the Korean trusteeship. Yet Yi could not support his ideas with any valid sources beyond some circumstantial evidence. This lack of valid sources might be one of the reasons why the debates could not evoke any additional academic attention. The heat suddenly cooled down.

Due to the lack of valid and clear-cut sources, it seems risky to insist on a "secret agreement" theory over the established "improptu decision" theory regarding the Korean division. However, some circumstantial evidence alongside various historical events and indirect sources tend to support the secret agreement explanation.

\[24\] For those debate between professors Cho Hyo-wôn and Yi Yong-huí, see Seoul Sinmun [Seoul News], 21 January, 10, 17-18, February 1955, and Chosôn ilbo [Korea Daily News], 26 January 1955.
First of all, the 38th parallel did not suddenly become an issue in 1945, but had a long history dating back to the turn of the 20th century when the neighboring big powers discussed the division of Korea. As early as 1896, during the high tide of Russian influence in Korea, Japan proposed an idea of territorial division along the 38th parallel. Russia, in the hope of getting control of the entire peninsula, rejected the Japanese suggestion.\(^{25}\) In September 1903, on the other hand, Russia made a similar proposal of taking the 39th parallel as a neutral zone to counter Japanese ascendency in Korea. This time Japan turned it down.\(^{26}\) When they tried to solve the Korean problem during World War II, the Russians and the Americans surely must have referenced those historical happenings. Particularly, President Franklin D. Roosevelt must have remembered that his uncle, President Theodore Roosevelt, was the mediator of the Russo-Japanese War, 1904-1905, and that Japan thereby acquired a dominant influence over the entire Korean peninsula.

Historically, Russia had a special interest in Korea in terms of the "ice-free" ports and its strategic location vis-à-vis both China and Japan since the late nineteenth century.


\(^{26}\) Ibid. p. 50.
century. Czar Nicholas II once wrote that "It is absolutely necessary that Russia should have a port which is free and open during the entire year. This port must be on the mainland (southeastern Korea) and must be connected with our existing possessions by a strip of land." Therefore there was no doubt that the Russians had long dreamed of recovering their lost territory of Sakhalin, the former rights over Manchurian ports and railroads, and the dominant influence over the Korean peninsula, which were taken away by the Japanese in 1905. When Ambassador W. Averell Harriman conferred with Stalin in December 1944, for instance, the Soviet leader clearly mentioned such Russian desires saying that, as compensation for Soviet entry into the war against Japan, Russia's position in the Far East should be generally re-established as it existed before the Russo-Japanese War of 1905. Not only would the Soviet Union gain some ice-free ports, through the reestablishment of dominant or partial influence over Korea, but it would possess a long-dreamed of "back door buffer zone." With the occupation, overall or partial, the Russians could assure that the peninsula would not provide a base for an attack against them.


In the meantime, the United States also had significant interests in Korea even though they were not critical to American national security. FDR originally had in mind a concept of "open door" on the Korean issue. The Cairo Declaration in December 1943, for instance, had a phrase of that "in due course Korea shall become free and independent." Behind the proviso of "in due course" was the multilateral trusteeship for Korea, and the idea of trusteeship aimed at preventing any single power's domination of Korea.

Some official records share the viewpoints of the "open door" notion. From late 1943 on, some State Department planners like Benninghoff, Borton, and Hiss expressed their opinion that a Korea entirely in hostile hands would be a threat to Pacific security. According to a policy paper prepared by them, "A Soviet occupation of Korea would create an entirely new strategic situation in the Far East, and its repercussions within China and Japan might be far reaching." Likewise, a special briefing paper prepared by the State Department for the president at Yalta warned that the military occupation of Korea by any single power might have far reaching political consequences because China and the Soviet Union are contiguous to Korea and have

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29 *FRUS, Cairo and Teheran, 1943*, p. 404.

30 US State Department, Record Group 59, Noter File, "Japan: Korea; Problems of International Trusteeship," 30 November 1943.
had a traditional interest in Korean affairs. While the planners feared that a Korea under Russian domination might be hazardous to the American position in the Pacific, they also regarded a unilateral American occupation as an unfavorable responsibility. The paper recommended, therefore, a multipower involvement in dealing with the peninsula.31 Finally, a briefing paper for the Potsdam Conference also states that "it is considered politically inadvisable for any one of the interested countries alone to invade Korea for the purpose of driving out the Japanese."32

Those "open door" ideas for the Korean peninsula largely stemmed from American worries about Soviet superiority in the region. FDR and his subordinates, especially the military leaders, believed that the Soviet Union was militarily capable of seizing Karafuto, North China, Manchuria, and Korea before the American forces could reach those areas.33

Another story indirectly suggests Stalin's confidence of the Soviet capability in dealing with the Korean affairs. In a meeting on February 8, 1945, at Yalta, FDR suggested to Stalin a multilateral trusteeship for Korea of up to twenty or thirty years. Stalin reportedly replied that "the

31 FRUS: Malta and Yalta, pp. 358-359. See also FRUS, 1944, V, pp. 1226, 1240-1241.

32 FRUS: Potsdam, I, p. 926.

shorter the period, the better."34 Another reliable source even indicates a more straight-forward response from Stalin;" why was there any need of trusteeship if the Koreans could produce a satisfactory government?"35 Whether the answer was the former or the latter one, Stalin's response to FDR's suggestion of a Korean trusteeship should not be interpreted that Stalin had a generous and sympathetic attitude to the independence of Korea. Rather, it reveals his confidence in Soviet ability in dealing with Korean affairs following Japan's defeat.

Realizing Russia's intentions and advantages in filling the power vacuum in the Korean peninsula following Japan's defeat, FDR wanted to neutralize the peninsula through a multilateral tutelage system. FDR specially favored a long period of tutelage for Korea from a minimum of twenty years to a maximum of forty years. Did he fail to realize the Korean peoples' impatience for full and immediate independence? The explanation of the traditional historiography has been "yes."36 But the real answer here is "no." What FDR wanted was the neutralization of Korea, based on an "open door" concept, where the American capability was relatively inferior vis-à-vis its counterparts. Not only did

34 PRUS: Malta and Yalta, p. 770.


36 For example, see Cho, Korea in World Politics, Chapter I, especially p. 24.
FDR try to impose a multilateral trusteeship but he also suggested such an unreasonably long period of tutelage over the Korean peninsula to neutralize an area where the United States did not enjoy dominant influence.

The Yalta Conference from February 4 to 11, 1945, virtually was the first crossroad where the American and the Soviet interests in East Asia were negotiated. They agreed to a division of spheres of influence in the Far East. By this time the United States called for the Soviet Union's participation in the Pacific War. As of February 1945 the American military leaders estimated that Japan had about two million or two and a half million-strong armed forces in the Japanese main islands, a million on the Chinese mainland, and another million in Manchuria and Korea. The Joint Chiefs of Staff also estimated that it would take at least eighteen months, even after the German surrender, to defeat the Japanese. Preoccupied by the fear that the Japanese were determined to fight to the last man, therefore, the American leaders seemed to be ready to pay a heavy price in order to bring the Russians into the Pacific war and thereby save American lives and resources. As the main objective of the Cairo Conference in November 1943 was


to rally the Chinese war effort against Japan. in fact, one of the major purposes of the Yalta Conference was to get a Russian promise of participation in the Pacific War. As he guaranteed Chiang Kai-shek the restoration of the stolen Chinese territories such as Manchuria, Formosa, and the Pescadores, FDR was ready to give the Russians some territorial concessions, including Sakhalin and the Kurile Islands.

However, Stalin wanted more than the lost territories. He argued that, without more concessions, the Soviet people would not understand why they had entered the war in the Far East because the Japanese had made no overt move against them. As a result, Stalin obtained not only the lost territories but also other concessions such as the preeminent rights over Outer-Mongolia (The Mongolian People's Republic), the ports of Dairen and Arthur, and the Manchurian railroads with the justification of that these rights was a mere revival of Russia's pre-1905 position in the Far East.

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Since the "plus 2" concessions were to violate not only Chinese sovereignty but also the promise at the Cairo Conference, FDR ambiguously added a proviso that "It is understood that the agreement concerning Outer-Mongolia and the ports and railroads referred to above will require concurrence of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek."41 By this secret agreement the Soviet Union was to be the dominant power in Outer-Mongolia and Manchuria, while the United States was to have hegemony over Japan.

Here somebody might raise a question that the Russians and the Americans must have agreed to share hegemony over Korea. One might argue that, considering the conference atmosphere in which FDR secretly gave away to the Russians many rights formerly belonged to China, it seemed to be much easier to divide and share the Korean peninsula, the "land belonging to nobody." This was one of the inferences of the so-called "Yalta secret agreement" rumor of the Korean division.

Of course, nowhere in the signed secret document was Korea mentioned. Yet the Korean issue was discussed on an informal basis. Even though there were no direct source to support the above theory, there was an indirect and yet interesting story among the records of those informal meetings. In the meeting on February 8, for instance, FDR indicated that he personally did not feel that it was nec-

41 Ibid.
essary "to invite the British to participate in the 
trus- 
teeship of Korea," but he felt that they might resist this. 
Stalin responded that the British would most certainly be 
offended and that "Churchill might kill us." 42 One thing 
strange is that, if the issue were simply "trusteeship" 
itsell as it appeared in the record, why did FDR and Stalin 
keep Churchill away from this discussion? Considering the 
fact that the trusteeship issue was already discussed sev- 
eral times between the big three, a secret talk on trustee-
ship without Churchill is quite unusual. But if we change 
the accented word of "trusteeship" into "occupation" or 
even "division," the conspiratorial atmosphere of the meet-
ing would be clearer. The possibility of an informal agree-
ment of bisectional occupation of Korea could be there 
under the cover of the more explicit agreement of trustee-
ship.

As mentioned before, however, FDR was satisfied with the 
agreement of trusteeship that would sufficiently neutralize 
the Soviet domination over Korea. Up until the time of the 
Yalta Conference, FDR was still optimistic on the postwar 
relationships between the major powers. He thought that the 
balance of power in the Far East would lie between the 
United States with a stronghold in Japan, the Soviet Union 
in Manchuria, and a Nationalist China that would establish 
friendly relationships with the United States. FDR thus

42 PRUS: Malta and Yalta, p. 770. Emphasis added.
planned a trusteeship for Korea with its allies, and he expected it would guarantee to exclude the Russians from domination over Korea. Therefore, it seemed to be that the possibility of a bisectional occupation of Korea must have been no more than a minor option by the time of the Yalta Conference.

However, in light of Soviet behavior behind Red Army lines in Eastern Europe, American policy makers came to worry more and more about whether the Russians would interpret the often ambiguous agreement as a license to dominate Korea. Therefore some officials advocated unilateral or multilateral occupation of Korea in order to have a sure hand to exclude Soviet domination over there. A special briefing paper for the Yalta Conference already suggested an international occupation and military government in Korea, even though there were no signs anywhere that FDR was bound by the paper. It partly read as follows:

The problems of Korea are of such an international character that with the completion of military occupation in Korea there should be... Allied representation in the army of occupation and military government in Korea.... 43 (Emphasis added)

After the inauguration of the Truman administration, as the Soviet-American diplomatic confrontation was rapidly hardening, the voices advocating a Korean occupation had increased. Henry L. Stimson made an analogy between Poland and Korea, and recommended on the eve of Potsdam that at

43 Ibid., p. 359.
least a token force of American soldiers or marines be stationed in Korea during the trusteeship."^{44} Edwin W. Pauley, Truman's reparations commissioner, even advised with a more aggressive tone as saying that "our forces should occupy quickly as much of the industrial areas of Korea and Manchuria as we can."^{45} According to these occupation advocates, partial or full military occupation of Korea was necessary to assure an American voice in handling postwar great power conflicts over Korea.

If there were any secret agreement of bisectional occupation of Korea, it would have been made between Yalta and Potsdam. A State Department policy paper, issued on June 22, 1945, includes a very interesting statement that "... the Soviet Government will, no doubt, establish military government in the portion of Korea under its control and may subsequently wish to establish a Korean regime friendly to the Soviet Union composed at least partially of Korean leaders groomed in the Soviet Union...."^{46} The accented phrase of "in the portion of Korea under its control" clearly indicates that there was a territorial boundary in

^{44} Stimson to Truman, 16 July 1945, FRUS: Potsdam, II, p. 631.

^{45} Truman, Year of Decisions, p. 433.

^{46} For the full context of the policy paper, see "An Estimate of Conditions in Asia and the Pacific at the close of the War in the Far East and Objectives and Policies of the United States," 22 June 1945, FRUS, 1945 VI, pp. 556-80. Emphasis added.
Korea which supposed to be under Soviet control. This suggests, in turn, there was an early agreement for the division of Korea. Another official record supports this speculation. On August 10, Ambassador Harriman cabled his recommendation to Truman and Byrnes that "Considering the way Stalin is behaving in increasing his demands on Soong I recommend that these landings be made to accept surrender of the Japanese troops at least on the Kwantung Peninsula and in Korea. I cannot see that we are under any obligation to the Soviets to respect any zone of Soviet military operation." The accented part of "any zone of Soviet military operation" also indicates that there was a zonal boundary between the United States and the Soviet Union. And, from the reading of the first sentence of the above quotation, the Kwantung Peninsula and Korea (or northern part of Korea at least) supposedly belonged to the Soviet zone of operation. The marked dates of these sources contradict the official "mid-August" theory of Korean division, and thereby support the possibility of an earlier agreement.

A close examination of the Potsdam Conference will give us a clearer view of the issue of Korean division. The Potsdam Conference was of great importance because it was a watershed of American postwar policy toward Korea, in which

47 Harriman to Byrnes and Truman, 10 August 1945, PRUS, 1945 VII, p. 967. Emphasis added.
classic nationalist views began to dominate. Differing from FDR's internationalism which advocated multilateral arrangements in handling the Russians in sensitive areas like Korea (of course the multilateral arrangements were devised to neutralize Russian hegemony), Truman's nationalism preferred a direct confrontation with the Russians in the way of establishing definite territorial boundaries. As a result, in Korea, a zonal occupation became the more reliable method to ensure a strong American voice even in the event of multilateral trusteeship.\(^{48}\)

In the Potsdam Conference, held between July 17 and August 2, 1945, Stalin seemed to have a somewhat high hand on the conference table. Truman had only three months of experience as President.\(^{49}\) Churchill was replaced by Clement Attlee on July 28, due to his party's defeat in a general election. While Russia was relieved of its fatal war against Germany after May, the Americans were still struggling in Okinawa with desperate resistance from the Japanese.

Through the Potsdam Conference, the American military hoped the Soviets would enter the war against the Japanese as soon as possible. Since the casualties in invading the

\(^{48}\) For the advent of classic nationalism, see Cumings, The Origins of the Korean War, Chapter 4.

\(^{49}\) Truman stated in his memoir that he even knew nothing of the contents of the Yalta Pact before entering the presidential office. Truman, Year of Decisions, p. 31.
Japanese homeland were expected to be high, believing in Japanese determination to fight to the last man and countering the unprecedentedly high casualties in Iwojima and Okinawa, American military leaders wanted the Soviet army to divert and destroy the Japanese Kwantung Army. Truman himself recalled that, even though he heard of the successful atomic bomb test, it was still of great importance for the United States to secure Russian entry into the war against Japan.

Upon an agreement of Russian entry, the American and the Soviet military leaders made a zonal division of military operations in the Far East. On July 26, both sides agreed to mark a line, dividing an operational boundary, which runs from Cape Boltina on the coast of Korea to a point 40°N, 135°E, then to a point 45° 45′N, 140°E, and thence along the parallel 45° 45′N to the line connecting Cape Crillon on the southern tip of Hokkaido. This line included part of southern Manchuria, nearly all of Korea, and Hokkaido within the American zone of operation. However, this was an air and sea operational line. Strangely enough, according to official records, they did not set up a line for land oper-

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50 JCS estimated that at least one million casualties would occur in invading the Japanese homeland. The United States Military Academy, West Point Atlas (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1959), Vol. II, map 166; see also Stettinius, Roosevelt and the Russians, p. 97.

51 Truman, Year of Decisions, pp. 265, 381-2, and 416.

Ations. As mentioned before, however, a State Department policy paper and Harriman’s cable indirectly showed there was an agreement of a zonal boundary for land operations sometime between Yalta and Potsdam.54

Meanwhile, there is an interesting source indicating that the boundary for ground operations was decided at Potsdam. General John F. Hull, then Chief of Operations Division as a lieutenant general, recalled in his autobiography as follows:

General Marshall informed me that the Secretary of State, Mr. Byrnes, insisted that upon the defeat of Japan American troops must occupy part of Korea; otherwise the Russians would overrun the entire country and make it a Soviet satellite.... Together with Brigadier General George A. Lincoln, my principal assistant, we studied a map of Korea and noted that if an east and west line were drawn across the peninsula just north of Seoul it would divide the country approximately in half and give us two of the three major ports in Korea for the supply of our troops. We,  

53 Truman also insisted in his memoir that there was no discussions of "any zone for ground operation of for occupation" for it was not expected that either Soviet or American ground troops would enter Korea in the immediate future. See Truman, Years of Crisis and Hope, p. 317; see also Year of Decisions, p. 383.

54 Personally this writer has a speculation that this agreement could be set up on May 28, 1945, when Truman’s emissary Harry Hopkins met Stalin. But nowhere in the official records on the Hopkins Mission was such agreement indicated, but reaffirmation of a four-power trusteeship for Korea. For Stalin’s reassurance of trusteeship, see FRUS,1945 VII, pp. 878-883; FRUS : Potsdam, Vol. I, pp. 41-44. But, considering the fact that at Potsdam the Allied leaders agreed to discuss the Korean trusteeship issue at the later foreign ministers conference, the connection between the Hopkins Mission and reaffirmation of trusteeship is not convincing. See FRUS : Potsdam, Vol. II, p. 253.
therefore, drew a line along the 38th parallel and gave it to General Marshall, recommending that it be established as the boundary line between Russian and American troops going into Korea. Nothing was said about a political boundary. It was purely a coordinating line between the two armies to prevent misunderstanding or conflict. The Russians accepted our proposal, somewhat to our surprise as it gave us the better communication system at least by water and the majority of the population. This is the genesis of the 38th Parallel which has caused us so much difficulty since.  

Hull's statement appears to be an original version of the official "August 11-12" story of the Korean division in which Colonels Bonesteel and Rusk participated. An American official document supports Hull's recall by stating that one day during the Potsdam Conference Hull and his staff members decided to divide the peninsula along the line near the 38th parallel. Contrary to Hull's insistence that the Russians accepted American proposal, however, this source states that neither side ever discussed that issue at Potsdam. But a Russian observer also confirms Hull's state-

55 John E. Hull, The Autobiography of General John Edwin Hull, 1895-1975 (No place: Copyright by Miriam Anderson, Mary Von Bargen, Mildred Head, and Dorothy A. Lynch, 1978), p.131. In the meantime, there was quite an opposite story in an official records. In a Tripartite Military Meeting of July 24, 1945, General Marshall informed the Russians, in response to their query on the prospect of Joint American-Soviet operations against Korea, that American amphibious landings had not been contemplated, and particularly not in the near future: "There were no additional assault ships which would permit a landing in Korea ... the possibility of an attack on Korea would have to be determined after landings on Kyushu." See FRUS: Potsdam, Vol. II, pp. 351-351.

56 Roy E. Appleman, South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu (Washington, D. C.: Office of the Chief of Military His-
ment that the 38th-parallel division was agreed to at the Potsdam Conference.  

At the military operational level there are several sources which support the hypothesis of an earlier decision than the "mid-August" time table. In July, 1945, General MacArthur's headquarters issued "Operation Blacklist," providing detailed instructions for the occupation of Japan and, if possible, Korea, which had been developed since May 1945. An American official history supports this argument. According to this source, MacArthur had already received instructions to prepare for occupying Japan, and "shortly before Potsdam these orders were broadened to include Korea." Later, in early August, MacArthur's staff members developed the "Baker" series of operations which sent the Sixth and the Eighth Armies from the Philippines to Japan and the Tenth Army (later changed to the XXIV Corps) from Okinawa to Korea: "Baker 40" for the Seoul


59 Schnabel, Policy and Direction, p.7. Emphasis added. The accented part is another reasoning supporting this writer's speculation that the division was agreed upon sometime between Yalta and Potsdam.
area, "Baker 41" for the Pusan area, and "Baker 42" for the Kunsan-Ch'ŏnju area.60 A noteworthy fact is that the above-mentioned three areas are located below the 38th parallel. This meant that MacArthur was instructed about his troops' limit of advance in the Korean peninsula well before the General Order No.1 was dispatched. The Russians were to be north of the 38th parallel. Marshall, who reportedly advised President Truman at Potsdam that MacArthur should be able to land a division at Pusan, expected that the Russians would occupy Ch'ŏngjin, a port at northeast coast of the peninsula.61

Therefore, if we accept the foresaid long discussion that the Korean division was agreed upon at the earlier dates than the official "August 10-11," the final mistery relating to the division would be solved; why did Stalin acquiesce to American demands suggesting the 38th parallel as the demarcation line, and consequently throw away the chance to occupy the entire peninsula? When Truman telegraphed the suggestion of the Korean division on August 15, 1945, the Soviet troops were already in northern Korea while American troops were still in Okinawa, 600 miles far

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60 See, for the details, Duncan Sinclair, "The Occupation of Korea--Initial Phases," Military Review XXVII (July 1947), pp. 32-33.

61 Schnabel, Policy and Direction, pp. 7-8. This account is soundly supported by Truman's memoir, as stated that General Marshall and Admiral King told Harriman during their stay at Potsdam that American forces would land in Korea. See Truman, Year of Decisions, p. 434.
from the Korean peninsula. The answer was that there was simply a former agreement on the bisectional occupation of Korea between the two countries, and that therefore the telegraphed demand was no more than a "reminder."

On August 9, the Soviet Union declared war against Japan, and on the following day the Soviet troops began to land at the northeastern coast of the peninsula. They captured the naval base at Najin on August 11 and landed at Ch’ŏngjin on August 13. Their movement was so swift that the Red Army obviously could have occupied the entire peninsula at will.

In those hectic days, meanwhile, American leaders at Washington might naturally have wondered whether the Russians would keep the secret agreement by halting their troops at the 38th parallel. In the light of Soviet actions in Eastern Europe following Hitler’s fall, it seems very possible that Stalin might not have abided by his agreement on the division of Korea. The Americans thus felt that they should do something to remind the Russians and to get their reaffirmation of the agreement before it was too late. The hurried telegram dispatched to the Russians on August 15, that the American official history identifies as the "first suggestion of the demarcation line," should be seen as a "reminder" in this context.
If the telegram were the first suggestion of the Korean division, first of all, the Americans should have waited for the answer from the Russians before they telegraphed to MacArthur General Order No. 1, which included the 38th parallel as the demarcation line between both armies. As it was, however, General Order No. 1 was telegraphed on August 15, the same day the Americans dispatched the suggestion to the Russians. In actuality, the dispatch of General Order No. 1 to the theater commander was the expression of strong will and determination of the United States to remind and confirm the Russians about the already agreed secret promise between both countries.

Second, in his reply to Truman on August 16, Stalin did not mention the provision of the suggested 38th parallel even though he requested some changes on the other subjects such as suggesting Soviet involvement in the occupation of Hokkaido. He simply kept silent on the 38th parallel issue as a nodding to the American "reminder."

Finally, Stalin kept his promise in receiving the American "reminder." On August 22, the Soviet troops entered P'yŏngyang, and on the following day a Red Army vanguard reached Kaesŏng, which is located right below the 38th parallel. But they immediately retreated from the line of advance to the exact 38th parallel, the northern tip of the city.\(^{62}\) American troops were still at Okinawa. Stalin's

\(^{62}\) Song, Nam-hŏn, Haebang Samnyŏn-sa, 1945-1948 [Three Years
action of troop halting at the 38th parallel could have been a recompense to the Americans’ faithfulness in keeping their promises during the final days of the European Theater. In the European Theater, there was a precedent that General Eisenhower halted his troops at the Elbe River line to follow the agreement between Allies at Yalta that the occupation of Berlin was left to Soviet military operations.63

Thus, the Soviet troops stayed north of the 38th parallel until September 8, 1945, when the first American troops landed at Inch’ŏn. Soon, they began to harden their positions in their own territories of occupation. The "temporary" demarcation line became an international border.

Although the American official history and current scholarship argue that the Korean division was decided in an impromptu way during August 10-15, 1945, the final days of the Pacific War, there are also many questions and contradictions in that explanation. The "military expedient" interpretation, claimed largely by government officials of the United States, is hardly an adequate explanation. It


seems to be a justification to escape from the responsibilities for the evil effects of the division. It is clear that behind the decision there were certain political motives, such as the concept of the balance of power and even the context of bipolar Cold War. In this context, the suspicion of "early secret agreement" arose. Even though no definitive source is available at this point to upset the existing theory, a number of circumstances, examined in this chapter, open the possibility of the "early secret agreement."

One might raise a final question as to why no single word on the agreement appears on any official documents. An answer could be like this: How could they justify the division and occupation of Korea, a nation not in the category of enemy? Thus, any agreement about Korean division should have been processed between the top decision-makers of both countries, i.e., Stalin-Truman and/or Stalin-Hopkins (Truman's Special Emissary), in a "verbal" form. In this context, the message, telegraphed to Stalin on August 15, 1945, may be regarded as a "reminder" to the Russians not to violate the verbal agreement.

Whether the decision was made in the hectic days of mid-August in 1945 or during the wartime conferences, the Korean division was the logical result of a political consideration: the developing power relationship in the Far East
was contingent on where and who received the surrender. In this point of view the Clausewitzian axiom that the military operation is a continuation of politics was still true. Both the Russians and the Americans could claim apparent political interests as of 1945 at the point of their troops being. While the Russians came to gain a long-dreamed of "buffer zone," the Americans also obtained an out-post to stem the tide of Soviet influence. It would aid America's unilateral control of Japan, a main stronghold for Pacific security.

In retrospect, either the Rooseveltian trusteeship idea or the hard-liner State Department officials' idea of actual occupation since 1943 had a common root: the basic goal was to assure that no single power would control the Korea exclusively. More precisely, they saw that a Korea in Soviet hands would be hazardous to American interests in the Far East.
CHAPTER II

EVOLUTION OF AMERICAN POLICY TOWARD KOREA AND ITS IMPACT ON KOREAN POLITICS

"I was thoroughly well pleased with the Japanese victory [over Russia], for Japan is playing our game."1

"How far and how thoroughly do we want to beat Japan?... What is our policy on Russian influence? Do we desire a counterweight to that influence? And should it be China or should it be Japan?"2

The first one of the above quotations is from a letter of President Theodore Roosevelt to his son on the Russo-Japanese War, 1904-1905. The second quotation is a question from Navy Secretary James Forrestal to Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson and acting Secretary of State Joseph C. Grew in May 1945. In spite of a four decades gap between the two quotations, there are remarkable continuities. The consistent message between them is the idea of checking the Russians in the Far East.


2 Millis, The Forrestal Diaries, p. 52.
When we look at American policy toward Korea during the period from 1945 to 1950, there was also a continuity in principle. Current scholarship usually identifies several critical turning points distinctively dividing the periods in which America's Korean policy revealed different postures. The years of 1947 and 1950 were the watersheds in this scheme of interpretation. For instance, Cho Soon Sung calls the 1947-1950 posture as "a policy of American resignation and withdrawal" comparing to the active engagement during the former period. Bruce Cumings calls the Korean War commitment, especially the decision of crossing the 38th parallel in the fall of 1950, as a critical shift to the "rollback mission." According to these arguments, American policy toward Korea showed a "engagement-disengagement-rollback" shift during 1945-1950. Granted that it was a hectic period in the history of American foreign policy, these were too many sudden shifts. Was there, in particular, a sudden reversal in American policy to rollback or to reintervene the Korean War?

This chapter will examine this in a different scheme—a dualism. As there might be a distinction between the "basic principles" and the "atmospheric force" to explain a philo-

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sophical phenomenon, there could be a distinction between the basic objectives and the methods to explain America's Korean policy at the time. The basic objective of American policy in Korea was to stem the expansion of Russian influence in the peninsula. There was a remarkable continuity in this basic principle during 1945-1950, even from 1943 when FDR vitalized American interests in Korea. This basic principle of stemming Russian influence, as explained in the former chapter, was the major reasoning behind the division of the Korean peninsula. Since then there has been no American disengagement at least in terms of this basic principle. Therefore, American intervention in the Korean War was not so sudden or surprising reversal as it appeared to be on the surface.

However, there was a shift in the methods to achieve the basic goal of counterweighting to Russian influence in the peninsula. While the Washington authorities attached to the trusteeship arrangement during 1945-1947 period, the occupation authorities at Seoul took a policy of "containment at the scene" in order to prevent Communist-instigated revolution in American occupation zone. As the Soviet-American Joint Commission deteriorated in mid-1947, however, the overall American policy shifted to an inexpensive "backdoor containment," relying on a friendly native regime without direct commitment of the American troops.
The major focus of this chapter will be placed on whether there was a continuing concept of "containment" in America's Korean policy during the 1945-1950 period. If so, it could be a basic theme affecting the anti-Communistic ideological socialization process of the Korean army officer corps in the same period.

A. DISCORD BETWEEN THE WASHINGTON AUTHORITIES' TRUSTEESHIP AND THE OCCUPATION AUTHORITIES' "CONTAINMENT AT THE SCENE." 1945-1947

The United States' Korean policy from 1945 to mid-1947 revealed some degree of discord between the Washington authorities and the occupation authorities in Seoul at least at the "operational level," not though in principle. Actually, between them, there was the shared objective of stemming the Soviet domination over Korea even though there were seemingly differences in terms of means in which the Washington authorities advocated the multilateral trusteeship while the occupation authorities tried to reduce Leftist influences and to strengthen Rightist political power. Those differences were caused partly by the lack of specified directives from Washington for the occupation authorities to operate the Korean affairs, and partly by the hectic political situations in South Korea in which strong
Leftist organizations challenged the occupation authorities. Another important factor was the attitude of Lieutenant General John R. Hodge, the commanding general of the occupation forces, toward the Leftists. He was a strong anti-Communist. As a result, the occupation authorities' policy revealed its ingredients of "containment at the scene" from the very early period of occupation.

The trustee concept had already emerged in mid-1942 when FDR suggested to Molotov that trusteeships should be set up for colonies once the war ended. On March 24, 1943, FDR also told British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden that Korea would be one of the appropriate areas for postwar trusteeship. Furthermore, FDR and Stalin agreed at Teheran that "the Koreans are not yet capable of exercising and maintaining independent government and that they should be placed under a 40-year tutelage."

But the plan never arrived at a detailed and written form of agreement even by the time of FDR's death. At the Yalta Conference in February 1945, the last one in which he participated, FDR proposed to Stalin a four-power trusteeship for Korea between the United States, the Soviet Union,


6 PRUS: Cairo and Teheran, p. 869n. See also Truman, Trial and Hope, p. 316.
Great Britain, and the Republic of China. Stalin generally agreed to FDR’s proposal, but they did not reach any formal agreement on the Korean trusteeship.

After President Truman’s inauguration in April, 1945, as discussed in the former chapter, a group of hard-line State Department officials intensified their voices in the new administration’s foreign policy-making process. Since late 1943 they had argued that a Korea entirely in Soviet hands was a threat to the security of the postwar Pacific. Moreover, the experience of Eastern Europe convinced them that Soviet political influence followed Russian arms. They feared that without some form of American counteraction, the Soviets could establish a dominant sphere of influence in the Korean peninsula. To prevent Russia’s predominant influence in Korea, the State Department planners thus sought a four-power trusteeship on the one hand, and looked for a surer means like an American occupation of Korea on the other hand. One of the missions of Harry Hopkins, Tru-

\[7\] Truman himself worried that, even if there were a four-power trusteeship, it was highly probable that the Soviets would dominate Korea through well trained Korean Communists unless the United States actively fostered a strong counterforce. He indirectly expressed his worries by repeating a warning from T. V. Soong, the Chinese Foreign Minister, as follows: "... the Russians have 2 Korean divisions trained in Siberia. He [Soong] believes that these troops will be left in Korea and that there will be Soviet-trained political personnel who will also be brought into the country. Under these conditions, he is fearful that even with a four-power trusteeship the Soviets will obtain domination of Korean affairs." Truman, Year of Decision, p. 317. For Soong’s remarks, see FRUS, 1945, VII, p. 914.
man's emissary to Stalin in late May 1945, was to secure Stalin's reassurance for a four-power trusteeship in Korea. An example of the search for a surer means, in the meantime, can be seen in a briefing book paper which was prepared by the State Department for the Potsdam Conference. It partly reads as follows:

No one of these nations [China, the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and the United States] would wish to see any one nation acquire a predominant position in Korea.... For these reasons it is considered politically inadvisable for any one of the interested countries alone to invade Korea.... [I]t is believed advisable that the invading forces be composed of units from the various interested countries, under a single over-all allied command.

That implied a joint occupation of Korea. The quest for a surer means to prevent Soviet domination becomes clearer when we look at another study paper prepared in early Spring 1944. It suggested occupation first, trusteeship later, because actual occupation was a surer means if Russians proved uncooperative. The Truman concept of trusteeship, in this sense, was merely one of the means to achieve the basic objective--preventing Soviet predominance in Korea. This was the main reason why zonal occupation

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8 That was also another verbal and informal agreement. See FRUS: Conference of Berlin, I, pp. 41-44, 47.


came first and a formal conference for trusteeship discussions came later. And, for the same reason, the trusteeship idea remained pivotal in the Washington authorities’ Korean policy until the Summer of 1947. This will become clear when we examine the situation in late 1945, the Moscow conference and its aftermath, and the rupture of the Soviet-American Joint Commission.

Once occupation had been set up, the Washington authorities began to seek the way to eliminate the zonal occupation. The prolonged zonal occupation was, after all, a violation of the Cairo Declaration that pledged a Korea of free and independent. A SWNCC directive, issued on October 20, 1945, stated that "the present zonal military occupation of Korea by United States and Soviet forces should be superseded at the earliest possible date by a trusteeship for Korea."^{11} On October, 21, 1945, John Carter Vincent, Director of the State Department’s Office of Far Eastern Affairs, confirmed the American intention of a Korean trusteeship as follows:

Korea, after years of subjection to Japan, is not immediately prepared for self-government. We, therefore, advocate a period of trusteeship dur-

ing which Korea will be prepared to take over the independent administration of that country. How long that will require, neither you nor I can say; we will agree, however, that the briefer the period, the better.12

As the news of Vincent's announcement reached Korea, the Korean people unanimously denounced it. Even the Leftists were no exception. The Korean People's Republic, a de facto government which was controlled by the Leftists, announced that "If the U.S. decides to enforce a trusteeship which includes slave relationships in politics and economics, then we, the Korean people, will reject it even though our lives be sacrificed."13

The occupation authorities recognized the intensity of the Korean opposition to the idea of a trusteeship. William Langdon, General Hodge's political advisor, reported to the State Department on November 10, 1945, that "...the trusteeship idea is repugnant to all parties and elements in Korea. If established it may cause a revolt and complicate problems to the extent of nullifying its advantages."14 Ten days later Langdon recommended that "we

12 Statement by John Carter Vincent at the Foreign Policy Association Forum, Department of State Bulletin, 21 October 1945, p. 57; see also Stars and Stripes, 22 October 1945, pp.1 and 4.

13 Political Trends Report #3, 29 October 1945, as quoted in "Trusteeship," p. 4, RG 332, Box 29.

14 Radio, TFGBI 20, CG USAFIK to SCAP (Langdon requests message be passed to State Dept. and Acheson) 100927/1, 10 November 1945, as quoted in "Trusteeship," pp. 5-6, RG 332, Box 29. Hodge supports Langdon's opinion in his report to the JCS. For Hodge's remarks, see Truman,
should drop it.  

On November 29, 1945, Secretary of State Byrnes replied to Hodge that, if adequate guarantees for the unification and independence of Korea could be obtained from the Russians, it might be possible for the United States to discontinue its support of trusteeship in Korea. However, the Washington authorities did not have any option to replace the impending Moscow Conference, scheduled from December 16 to 26, 1945, in which the Foreign Ministers of Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States would discuss various unsolved postwar problems including the Korean issue. At the Moscow conference, the three powers officially decided on a four-power trusteeship for Korea of up to five years.

When the first news of the Moscow agreement reached Korea on December, 1945, the Korean people rose against

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Years of Trial and Hope, p. 318.

15 Radio, TFGBI 20, CG USAFIL to SCAP, 201730/I, 20 November 1945, as quoted in "Trusteeship," p. 6, RG 332, Box 29.


17 For the contents of Section III of the Communique, the portion on Korea, see United States Department of State, Moscow Meeting of Foreign Ministers: December 16-26, 1945 (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1946), pp. 14-16; Department of State Bulletin, 30 December 1945, p. 1030. For details of the discussion on the Korean issue, see PRUS, 1945. II, pp. 610-621, 639-643, 693-700, and 716-721.

18 Seoul sinmun, 30 December 1945; Tong'a ilbo, 30-31
The anti-trusteeship movement flared throughout January 1946, and demonstrations lasted periodically all the way through mid-1947. At first, the Leftists also unanimously denounced the Moscow agreement. On January 3, 1946, however, the Communist party and affiliated leftist groups suddenly reversed their stand and began to voice support for the agreement. Hodge recalled that the second of January was "the day they got their orders from the Russians." The sudden reversal of the Leftist position deepened the antagonism between the right and left wing political groups in South Korea.

The embroilment of trusteeship issue almost paralyzed the American military government. Since there was no information or directives in advance on the Moscow decision, the occupation authorities were unable to handle the anti-trusteeship turmoil in its very early stage. According to the record of the Corps Staff Conference on December 31, 1945, General Hodge complained that "The official commu-

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18 December 1945; SCAP, Summation, No. 3 (December 1945), p. 206; and "Trusteeship." RG 332, Box 29, p. 8.


que out of Moscow was 48 hours late in reaching us. The piecemeal releases by 'half-witted reporters' came out first and alarmed the Koreans to an extraordinary degree." 21 Two days later Hodge cabled to Washington his message of regret stating that "I firmly believe this entire unpleasant incident could have been averted if I had been informed early on the results of the Moscow Conference." 22

Nevertheless, as designated in the Moscow Communiqué, the first Joint Soviet-American Commission convened in Seoul on March 20, 1946. In his opening address, the Soviet chief commissioner Colonel General T. F. Shtykov claimed that the Soviet interest was to create Korea as a "true democratic and independent country, friendly to the Soviet Union, so that in the future it will not become a base for an attack on the Soviet Union." 23 To accomplish this

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21 XXIV Corps Historical File (RG 332) includes many precious sources like the records of Corps Staff Conference. On the delay of information of the Moscow agreement, see Corps Staff Conference, 31 December 1945, RG 332, Box 27. See also "Orientation for Draper," RG 332, Box 29, p. 5.


objective the Soviet delegation insisted that the Joint commission had no obligation to consult those parties and organizations which opposed the Moscow decisions on trusteeship. Since the anti-trusteeship groups comprised almost all the rightist organizations, such a provision would have automatically eliminated all but Communist dominated groups from a voice in the formation of the provisional Korean government.

The Americans, of course, opposed the Soviet position arguing that anti-trusteeship activities were fully within the right of freedom of expression. They insisted that "Koreans may freely express their wishes and desires in the formation of their own government including their opposition to an as yet undefined concept of 'trusteeship'."24 On May 6, 1946, the discussion bogged down and on May 9, with the return of the Soviet delegation to P'yŏngyang, the Commission adjourned sine die pending clarification the consultation issue.

During the period of a year-long adjournment from May 1946, the Washington authorities instructed General Hodge to shift his support from the right-wing political groups to the middle-of-the-road groups. This was the beginning of the so-called "coalition movement" between the moderate rightists and leftists. The Washington authorities fell into a dilemma with the trusteeship issue. If they sup-

24 "Report on South Korea," RG 332, Box 29, p. 21.
ported the trusteeship program, they would automatically forfeit the support of rightists who had opposed the trusteeship. If they tried to win rightist support by violating the Moscow agreement, in the meantime, the Soviets would certainly accuse the Americans of bad faith. The Washington authorities tried to escape from this pitfall by supporting the moderates. Such a movement, they hoped, would not only ease tension between the Americans and Korean people but also might facilitate some progress in the Joint Commission. 25

There is an interesting secret report, dated October 16, 1946, from Arthur C. Bunce to the Secretary of State that reveals the connection between the negotiations for reconvening of the Joint Commission and the coalition movement in south Korea. Bunce, the Economic Advisor to Hodge, visited P'yongyang secretly between the third and eighth of October to make some compromises. His host was G. M. Balasanov, the Chancellor of the Soviet occupation authorities. Both men were also members of the each delegation for the Commission. The report partly read as follows:

I informed Mr. Balasanov that the United States would under no condition consent to the establishment of a Provisional Government dominated by the Communists .... Mr. Balasanov...defended Soviet policies saying that the United States had supported the reactionary and pro-Japanese ele-

ments in South Korea, and that a provisional government dominated by such elements would not be acceptable to the Soviet Union. I assured Mr. Balasanov that the United States had no intention of establishing a provisional government controlled by Syngman Rhee and Kim Koo and also that we had spared no efforts in trying to secure the cooperation of all leftist elements ....26

This conversation reveals Washington's intention to oust the extreme rightists who had opposed the trusteeship and to support moderate factions in order to get Soviet cooperation. But, at the same time, it confirms both sides' uncompromising stands not to allow each other's domination.

But Washington's effort to support the middle-of-the-roaders was not successful. First of all, it was too late to gain momentum. Had the Americans tried to coalesce the Korean Provisional Government (KPG) in exile with Yŏ Un-hyŏng's Korean People's Republic (KPR) in the very first stage of their occupation, a nationalistic and centric political power could have emerged. Kim Kyu-sik, Vice-Chairperson of the KPG, was well known moderate rightist and nationalist. Kim Koo, Chairperson of the KPG, was not such an extreme rightist as the Americans thought. He was rather a strong nationalist. Yŏ was also a strong nationalist and a moderate socialist. At that time, every political faction but the Communists supported the KPG. Unfortunately, however, the Moscow Agreement aggravated the political

situation in South Korea. The right and left-wing parties hardened their ideologies. Whoever supported the trusteeship was automatically considered as a leftist, while anyone opposing it was a rightist. The centrists were denounced as opportunists by both extremes. For instance, the Communists who dominated the South Korean Labor Party branded Yŏ an "opportunist and reactionary."27 Likewise, Syngman Rhee and his followers denounced the Coalition Committee as a vehicle to spread pro-Communist influence.28 Both the extreme right and left-wing camps were so confident of their power and so well organized that the moderate Coalition Committee was unable to acquire appreciable organized support.

Moreover, the occupation authorities were not cooperative with the coalition movement initiated by Washington. General Hodge expressed his belief that the efforts to build an interim government and legislative assembly around a coalition of moderate groups were futile. He never had much confidence in the idea, which had been forced on him by State Department officials concerned about occupation authorities' heavy dependence on the extreme right-wing

27 "The Coalition Committee, Its Enemies and Supporters," 20 February 1947, RG 332, Box 23, p. 1. This five page-long article, written by an unidentified political analyst of the USA-USSR Joint Commission, has very accurate and objective informations. Hereafter "The Coalition Committee."

28 Ibid., p. 1.
forces. He was always suspicious of moderate Leftist leaders' sincerity in working with the occupation authorities. For instance, Hodge did not believe Yŏ. To him, Yŏ was just another harassing Leftist.29

Thus, the hope of the Washington authorities to mobilize supporters of the trusteeship plan through centrist political forces turned out to be an illusion. Furthermore, its repercussions were far-reaching because the schism between the occupation authorities and the rightist groups became strained. Eventually the intensified anti-coalition and anti-trusteeship campaigns of the extreme Rightists weakened the stands of the American delegation in the Second Joint Commission and contributed to its final breakdown.

The Second Joint Commission reconvened on May 21, 1947, in the face of the intensified anti-trusteeship movement. It was soon apparent that the Soviet delegation intended to pursue the same strategy used in the 1946 meetings. The Soviets insisted again that the parties and organizations of the Anti-Trusteeship Committee should not be included on

the list for consultation. Secretary of State Marshall directed the American Delegation not to compromise and to stand firm on this point. The issue of consultation appeared to be an insurmountable barrier. By the end of August 1947, the Joint Commission was virtually deadlocked. The Washington authorities, frustrated by the futility of the bilateral talks with the Soviets, decided to refer the Korean problem to the United Nations.

In retrospect, the Soviets and the Americans were not necessarily ready to grant Korean independence at the expense of their own interests. In their essentials, Soviet and American goals in Korea were remarkably similar; neither power was ever willing to make concessions toward Korean independence and reunification if such concessions would dilute their ability to control the outcome or to

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32 But the American Delegation continued to exist by mid-August 1948, when the Military Government transferred its governmental functions to the newly established Government of the Republic of Korea. The General Orders No. 32 of USAF IX, issued on August 16, 1948, stated that "The American Delegation to the United States-Union of Soviet Socialist Republics Joint Commission established by General Orders Number 11, 10 March 1946, as amended, is discontinued." See General Orders No. 32, 16 August 1948, in RG 332, Box 41.
prevent domination by the opposing power.

While the Washington authorities officially maintained their commitment to a trusteeship for Korea throughout 1946 and until mid-1947, in the meantime, the occupation authorities in Seoul pursued a policy of "containment at the scene." From the very early period of occupation, the occupation authorities had to overcome serious challenges coming from strong Leftist movements in South Korea in which the Leftists already established a de facto government. The occupation authorities imposed various restrictions on the Leftist movements, rendered considerable assistance to the Rightists to strengthen them, and tried to build up indigenous internal security forces and a national defense system to counter potential internal and external threats. Current scholarship concludes that "Korea was yet another example of the consistent postwar American policy to counter or, through its direct military occupation, reverse the momentum and accomplishments of revolutionary movements." 33 However, it was rather a policy "at the scene", initiated by the occupation authority, than a well-planned and fully coordinated policy between Washington and Seoul.

Before examining the major contents of the occupation authorities' policy of "containment at the scene," an important prior question should be cleared up: Did the occupation authorities have a free hand to deal with the

33 Joyce and Gabriel Kolko, The Limits of Power, P. 277.
Korean problem; and, if so, how much discretion did Hodge have?

Originally, the line of responsibilities of Korean occupation policy was a multi-departmental system in terms of its planning and execution. The Department of State was responsible for the formulation of general policy; and the War Department (later the Department of the Army) was responsible for carrying out policy through a chain of command that stretched from the JCS through MacArthur in Tokyo to Hodge in Seoul. In this process, the occupation commanders were to have some discretion when specified directives were unavailable from the higher levels of the chain. Actually the State Department had no concrete Korean policy beyond a vague idea of trusteeship. As a result, Hodge had relatively wide discretion in handling the Korean situation. H. Merrell Benninghoff, Hodge's political advisor or dispatched by the State Department, revealed it as he cabled to the Secretary of State on September 13, 1945:

"The initial post surrender phase is practically over and in the absence of policy directives this HQ must continue operating on a day to day basis in an effort to control the local situation as it develops." 34 These situation was largely consistent during the 1945-1947 period. 35 Hodge's

34 Message, CG XXIV Corps APO 235 (Benninghoff) to CINCPAC APO 500 (Secretary of State), TFXAG 514, 13 September 1945, RG 352, Box 29.

35 Millis, The Forrestal Diaries, p. 135.
room for discretion had been even widened after he threatened to resign in early 1946 over the trusteeship issue, for Truman decided to let Hodge control the joint commission negotiations.36

Under those circumstances, personal viewpoints of the commanding general could have a very significant impact on the direction of Korean politics during the occupation period. Basically, General Hodge was a strong anti-Communist. He once argued that, if an indigenous government were established in South Korea, the Communist party should be outlawed. He viewed the Communists as a monolithic group completely under the sway of Moscow.37

Hodge's views of suspicion and distrust toward the Leftists were well expressed in his numerous records of corps staff conferences, public statements, press conferences, and briefings. Among them corps staff conference records include the most straightforward expressions. Hodge warned of the Soviet expansionism saying that "There is no question at all but what the Soviet Union wants to have Korea become a Soviet State and join them. There are many men here in South Korea who are now taking the orders from Moscow. This is only one small item on the Soviet list of places to expand.... Believe me Korea is just one pawn in

36 FRUS, 1946, VIII, pp. 617-619.
their great ambition."\textsuperscript{38} Therefore, Hodge declared that his mission was "to prevent Korea from becoming a satellite state."\textsuperscript{39} He also predicted horrible trouble "If we don't clean up our own skirts pretty soon."\textsuperscript{40}

As briefly mentioned earlier, the occupation forces met a strong Leftist wind when they landed on Korean soil on September 8, 1945. The three-week period from August 15 to September 8, the interval between Japan's surrender and the arrival of the American troops, South Korea was in a state of extreme confusion. During this period Leftists could solidify their position to take the initiative in the political arena of liberation.

An American official report states that "The leftist forces, through the People's Republic and its local organs of authority, the People's Committees, were in political dominance within Korea just prior to the arrival of American forces .... "\textsuperscript{41} This was the situation that Hodge had

\textsuperscript{38} Corps Staff Conference, 20 March 1946, RG 332, Box 28.

\textsuperscript{39} Corps Staff Conference, 18 March 1946, RG 332, Box 28.

\textsuperscript{40} Corps Staff Conference, 25 March 1946, RG 332, Box 28. For the other comments on the Leftists and their aims, see also Corps Staff Conferences, 8 October 1945, RG 332, Box 27; 31 December 1945, RG 332, Box 27; and 2 January 1946, RG 332, Box 28. These conference records are a part of "Historical Journal of Korea" in RG 332.

\textsuperscript{41} "Report on South Korea," RG 332, Box 29, p. 8. Hodge also recalled that up until about December 1945, when the American civil affairs units moved in, local area was under Communist controls. See "Off the Record," 23 July 1947, p. 5. This is the record of Hodge's informal press conference with ten American newspaper editors and
confronted.

General Hodge had to establish the firm authority of the occupation forces over south Korean political affairs and, therefore, needed to neutralize the strong Leftist influence. On September 13, 1945, five days after the arrival of the American troops, Hodge established a military government and appointed Major General Archibald V. Arnold as the military governor. He then proceeded with a non-recognition policy to the de facto leftist governing body of Chosŏn inmin konghwa'guk [Korean People's Republic: KPR]. Hodge issued a statement in late September that "United States policy prohibits official recognition or utilization for political purpose of any so-called Korean Provisional Government or other political organizations by United States forces."

He simply negated the KPR as a government by calling it as one of "political organizations." On October 10, Military Governor Arnold declared that the military government was "only one government in Korea south of 38 degrees north latitude," and "the (self-styled) government of the Republic of Korea is entirely without any authority, power or reality." The occupation

publishers, filed in RG 332, Box 29. For more details on the strong Leftist movements, see "Report on south Korea," pp. 13-15.

42 New York Times, 14 September 1945, p. 3.

43 SCAP, Monthly Summary, No. 1 (September/October 1945), p. 177.
authorities must have been encouraged by a directive from Washington around this time over the non-recognition policy. The SWGCC sent a message which read:

You will immediately place under control all existing political parties, organizations and societies. Those whose activities are consistent with the requirements of Military occupation and its objectives should be encouraged. Those whose activities are inconsistent with such requirements and objectives should be abolished....

However, the "verbal" non-recognition policy toward the KPR was not the only effort of the occupation authorities to neutralize the strong Leftists movement. The occupation authorities were also actively involved not only in quelling leftist-inspired strikes, sabotages, and rebellions, but also in preempting such activities.

Actually the KPR and many other Leftist parties organized numerous subsidiary groups throughout the provinces. Those pseudo-political or para-military youth organizations were very radical and violent, usually equipped with illegal weapons. The Occupation authorities actively raided their headquarters and disbanded them. For instance, on September 28, 1945, the Pusan branch of the Student Public Peace Body was disbanded. The military police found some

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44 To The Press of Korea, issued by General Arnold on 10 October 1945, RG 332, Box 27. See also Corps Courier, 11 October 1945, RG 332, Box 27; and "Activities of Left-wing Parties," RG 332, Box 29, pp. 15-17.

45 Basic Initial Directive for Civil Affairs in Korea, SWGCC 176/8 Part I (one) 9c, 13 October 1945, RG 332, Box 29.
257 rifles, 14 pistols, and 3 shotguns.\textsuperscript{46} On January 2, 1946, the National army Preparatory Unit, another KPR substructure, was disbanded and its leader Lee Hyuk Ki (Yi Hyŏk-ki) was arrested.\textsuperscript{47} When his G-2 reported that they had raided the Young Men's Association which was a Communist affiliated group, and that 6 machine guns and 185 rifles were found, on March 20, 1946, General Hodge responded that "We are sitting on a powder keg and anybody who thinks the occupation of Korea has been accomplished simply doesn't know what he's talking about."\textsuperscript{48}

The other blow to the KPR was the closing down of Maeil sinbo [Daily Gazette], a newspaper run by the KPR, on November 12, 1945. After the occupation authorities set up the military government, the tone of Maeil sinbo became more and more critical and contentious toward the policies of the military government. The official explanation for the suspension of publication was that the military government was investigating "some flaw in the bookkeeping or business methods" of Maeil sinbo.\textsuperscript{49} Actually the Corporation had no "head" who was responsible for management or

\textsuperscript{46} "Activities of Left-wing Parties," RG 332, Box 29, pp. 14-15.

\textsuperscript{47} Korean Situation, an outgoing radios from CG USAFIK to CINCAPAC, TFGBI 848, 228337/1, 21 January 1946, RG 332, Box 5.

\textsuperscript{48} Corps Staff Conference, 20 March 1946, RG 332, Box 28.

\textsuperscript{49} Press Conference, 12 November 1945, RG 332, Box 27.
bookkeeping. But there was no doubt that the occupation authorities tried to shut the mouth of the KPR.\textsuperscript{50}

As the occupation authorities' pressures on the Leftist parties and organizations intensified, there emerged a core of the extreme Left around the Communist Party. For instance, after Yŏ and his moderate socialist faction defected on October 22, 1945, the KPR fell under Communist control led by Pak Hŏn-yŏng.\textsuperscript{51} And, as the hard-line Leftists flocked together for terroristic activities, it became easier for the occupation authorities to apprehend the outlaws. In early September 1946, the occupation authorities issued a warrant for the arrest of Pak Heun Young (Pak Hŏn-yŏng), Lee Kang Kook (Yi Kang-guk), and Lee Chu Ha (Yi Chu-ha), the leaders of the Communist Party of South Korea.\textsuperscript{52} With their escape the Communist Party and its allied organizations went underground. They reorganized the extreme leftists under the banner of Nam-Chosŏn nodong-dang [South Korean Labor Party] on November 23–24, 1946.

\textsuperscript{50} The newspaper began to reprint since 23 November 1945 under the new name of Seoul sinmun (Seoul News). See Press Releases, 24 November 1945, Item 6, in RG 332, Box 27.

\textsuperscript{51} For the details of schism between Yŏ and Pak, see "Activities of Left-wing Parties," RG 332, Box 29, pp. 25-32.

\textsuperscript{52} SCAP, Summation, No. 12 (September 1946), p. 15. See also "Report on South Korea," RG 332, Box 29, pp. 15-16.
In March 1947, following the 24-hour strike on March 21, there was a second tide of wholesale arrests of Leftists in which some two thousand were arrested.\textsuperscript{53} Again in August 1947, during the second Soviet-American Joint Commission meeting in Seoul, the occupation authorities arrested more than one hundred Leftist ring leaders. In responding to the Soviet charge that "mass arrests" were hampering the work of the commission, Hodge retorted that the arrests were made to frustrate a revolutionary plot partly inspired by Russian-held North Korea and that the Soviet accusation was an attempt "to interfere in the conduct of the government of South Korea."\textsuperscript{54}

While they were suppressing the Leftist organizations and their movements, at the same time, the occupation authorities were trying to strengthen the Rightist political forces. It was a double-edged effort--suppressing one side and encouraging the other.

Belated in taking political initiatives, the Rightists organized Han'guk minjudang [Korean Democratic Party: KDP] on September 16, 1946, under the leadership of Song Chin-u, Wŏn Se-hun, and Cho Pyŏng-ok.\textsuperscript{55} Its members and supporters

\textsuperscript{53} "Activities of Left-wing Parties," RG 332, Box 29, pp. 43-46.

\textsuperscript{54} \textit{Stars and Stripes}, 26 August 1947, p. 1, "Hodge Blasts Russ Charge." See also "Report on south Korea," RG 332, Box 29, p. 29.

\textsuperscript{55} Their preparatory meeting began on September 8, the day American troops arrived. Song, \textit{Haebang samnyŏn-sa}, Vol.
consisted of wealthy class such as landlords, bankers, businessmen, and manufacturers. In general, the Korean public regarded their wealth and good fortune as the result of their collaboration with the Japanese. The KDP at first could not match the KPR in terms of organizational cohesion and popularity. For the purpose of face saving, the KDP pledged full support for the Korean Provisional Government in Chunking, China, and nominated several well-known nationalist leaders like Syngman Rhee, Kim Koo and Philip Jason (Sŏ Chae-pil) as the party’s heads. And, because they feared that "people’s revolution" might hamper their accumulated wealth and prestige, the KDP members bitterly denounced KPR’s platforms and declared anti-Communism.56

The KDP’s conservative, pro-American platform was very compatible with the occupation authorities’ desire for the status quo to maintain order and stability in South Korea against any potential Communist-inspired "revolution." With their wealth and support from the occupation authorities, the KDP and other rightist organizations rapidly grew up. According to an observer, it was no secret that the occupation authorities favored the Right and were "anxious for the parties of the right to acquire strong popular support."57 Benninghoff, Hodge’s political advisor, expressed

I, pp. 117-125; Han, Han’guk chŏngdang-sa, pp. 60-64.
56 Song, ibid., pp. 127-129.
57 Bertram D. Sarafan, "Military Government in Korea," Far
a suggestive standpoint in this term in his third report to
the Secretary of State on September 13, 1945, that "The
well known leaders whom we are inclined to regard favorably
are in or associated with the so-called 'Democratic Party';
they denounce the Communists and wish the return of Syngman
Rhee and others of his group. They also appear to represent
the opinions of the majority of educational and profession-
al leaders." 58

The first step the occupation authorities took to
strengthen the Right-wing political parties was to furnish
them a patriotic and nationalistic image in order to
enhance the popularity of the rightist groups. Benning-
ghoff, on behalf of Hodge, reported that, "This headquar-
ters will recommend that such persons as Kim Soo [Koo],
Syngman Rhee and others be brought to Korea as rapidly as
possible in an effort to stabilize the situation." 59

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58 Message, CG XXIV Corps APO 235 (Benninghoff) to
CINCPAC APO 500 (Secretary of State), TFKAG 514, 13
September 1945, RG 332, Box 29. See also Benninghoff to
the Secretary of State, 15 September 1945, FRUS, 1945,
VI, p. 1050.

59 Message, USAFIK (Benninghoff) to CINCPAC (Pass to
State Department), TFKAG 524, no date but apparently 15
September 1945, RG 332, Box 29. See also Benninghoff to
the Secretary of State, 15 September 1945, FRUS 1945,
VI, p. 1053; "Political Movements in Korea," a report of
Benninghoff to the Secretary of State, 29 September
1945, p. 6, RG 332, Box 23.
The occupation authorities expected a lot of help from the arrivals of Rhee and Kim in strengthening the rightist movements. In his Corps staff conference on November 2, 1945, Hodge said that "Koo [Kim Koo] is the salt needed for the stew and that his presence here would be of help to us." In another staff conference Hodge clearly described Kim Koo's returning with the "containment" idea as follows:

"We are walking on the edge of a volcano.... The political affairs in Korea simply mirror political affairs throughout the Far East, particularly China. Chiang Kai-shek is fighting communism in China and he wants a democratic Korea on his flank. He is therefore backing Kim Koo and this fact is well known to Korean radicals. The point at issue now is whether or not the entire Far East will go communism."

The occupation authorities detected a "developmental dissolution" occurring in the Communist Party for eliminating intra-party strife after November 23, the day Kim Koo arrived. The Americans interpreted the reason for the development as "the arrival of Kim Koo and associates and the realization by the Communists that their strength might be tested by the rightist prestige of the Provisional Government leaders." An official report also stated that Rhee and Kim's returning meant for the KPR that "the chips were down," and that "it had no choice but to outdo its

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60 Corps Staff Conference, 2 November 1945, RG 332, Box 27.
61 Corps Staff Conference, 12 November 1945, RG 332, Box 27.
rival pseudo-government, amalgamate with it or disappear into the oblivion of history." 63

The return of Rhee and Kim, as Hodge expected, seemed to give the rightists momentum in terms of their consolidation and popularity. That was an ample effect, however. As mentioned earlier, the strong rightist movement turned out to be a heavy burden on Hodge in handling the anti-trusteeship embroilment after the Moscow Conference in late December 1945. He simply fell into a dilemma between extremes of the Left and the Right. The State Department, in its hopeless efforts to support the centrists in connection with the trusteeship idea, even suggested to Hodge that Rhee and Kim be discarded because they had "on the whole hampered rather than aided" American policy in Korea. 64 But Hodge could not do that simply because he still faced the strong leftist movements.

The second arrangement the occupation authorities made to help the rightist movements was to give them access to the mass media. Since his arrival in mid-October, for instance, Syngman Rhee had opportunities to speak to the Korean people over the official radio station JODK "every Wednesday evening at 7:20 P.M." 65 It was a great advantage

63 "Activities of Left-wing Parties," RG 332, Box 29, p. 20.


65 Press Releases, 16 November 1945, Item 5, RG 332, Box
for a politician to have a regular broadcasting hour, and
Rhee usually delivered his anti-Soviet and anti-Communist
speeches to consolidate various rightist organizations
under his political machine, the Central council for the
Rapid Realization of Korean Independence [Taehan tongnip
ch’oksong chung’ang hyŏbŭi-hoe: CCRRKI].

The occupation authorities also resumed publication of
two formerly prominent newspaper, Chosŏn ilbo [Korea daily
News] and Tong’a ilbo [East Asia Daily News], which eventu-
ally became the symbol of the conservative press. Chosŏn
ilbo began to print at the plant of the suspended Maeil
sinbo, the radical paper. Military Governor Arnold said
that "use of one publishing firm by more than one newspaper
was not unusual" in America.66 Tong’a ilbo took the plant
of Keijo Nippo, the official gazette of the Japanese
Government-General. Tong’a ilbo’s President, Song Chin-u,
was the leader of the KDP. The KDP, the leading rightist
party, therefore came to print its "semi-official" paper in
the government-owned printing plant exclusively.67

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66 Press Releases, 16 November 1945, Item 2, RG 332, Box
27.
67 Ibid. See also Press Conference, 16 November 1945, RG
332, Box 27. In this conference a newsman of Maeil sinbo
severely criticized the Military Government for its tak-
ing side with one party.
More importantly, the occupation authorities did favor the conservative rightists in adopting Koreans into political and bureaucratic positions of the Military Government. First of all, on October 5, 1945, the Military Governor Arnold appointed the Advisory Council composed of eleven prominent Koreans.\textsuperscript{68} Basically it was a rightist council; nine out of eleven members were KDP leaders or conservatives. Cho Man-sik, a well-known educator and Christian nationalist, could not participate since he was in North Korea. Yŏ Un-hyŏng, the only leftist appointee, simply refused to participate.

The existence of the council affected the recruitment procedure for Korean bureaucrats into the military government. When the Americans replaced the Japanese officials with Koreans, the Korean rightist advisors naturally recommended those candidates whose political ideas and social class were similar to theirs. This was one of the main reasons why so many Japanese collaborators dominated the military government bureaucracy.

After the breakdown of the first Joint Commission, Hodge promoted a "Koreanization" policy for further consolidation of South Korea under rightist domination. On August 31, 1946, Hodge directed the Military Governor, Major General

\textsuperscript{68} Press Releases, 6 October 1945, Item 13, RG 332, Box 27; "Report on South Korea," RG 332, Box 29, p. 8; Benninghoff to the Acting Political Advisor in Japan, 9 October 1945, FRUS, 1945, VI, p. 1069.
Archer L. Lerch, to turn over operation of the various government departments to Koreans, leaving American military personnel to remain in advisory capacities only. On February 6, 1947, the Military Governor nominated An Chae-hong as Civil Administrator, administrative chief of the executive branch of the civil government. He was a well known rightist leader with moderate tendencies. Together with a judicial branch and the South Korean Interim Legislative Assembly, this executive branch composed of the South Korean Interim Government [Nam-Chosŏn kwado ch'ongbu:SKIG]. As the Soviets intensified their policy of communizing North Korea and of building up a strong indigenous government, the American occupation authorities likewise sought to establish a rightist Korean administration in South Korea. This was the situation during the adjournment period of the Joint Commission from May 1946 to May 1947.

Even though the Joint Commission reconvened in May 1947, rising Cold War feeling dominated the sessions. Another deadlock was unavoidable considering the unbending attitudes of both sides.

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70 Ibid., No. 17 (February 1947), p. 11.

71 For the structure of the SKIG, see Organization Chart, South Korea Interim Government, 1 January 1948, prepared by Statistics Division, National Economic Board, RG 332, Box 39.
Around this time of the second deadlock of the Joint Commission, Hodge made it clear in an informal press conference with American journalists that the mission of the occupation authorities was to contain the spread of Communism. It partly reads as follows:

Correspondent: But you consider Korea essential to the defense of Japan and Japan essential to the defense of our outlying bases?

Hodge: It isn’t primarily a question of the defense of Japan, but it is more a matter of prestige. If we pull out of here after all the announcements, without solving the problem satisfactorily the Japs are looking over their shoulder at the Russians. A turn of the wheel might give them a lot more prestige. Maybe we can’t wipe them all out, but we can put a crimp in the spread of Communism in all Asia.\textsuperscript{72} (Emphases added)

This, as will be examined later, was an overture to the "backdoor containment."

In retrospect, the prime goal of American policy toward Korea during the 1945-1947 period was to stem Soviet domination over the entire Korean peninsula. The most salient example was the American occupation of South Korea itself. The official history of the military government clearly mentioned that "This was physically to occupy a part of Korea and to assure thereby that no other power would control the situation exclusively."\textsuperscript{73} As Hodge argued in the

\textsuperscript{72} "Off the Record," record of an informal press conference of Hodge, 23 July 1947, RG 332, Box 29, pp. 1, 10-12.

\textsuperscript{73} United States Army Military Government in Korea, "History of the United States Army Military Government in Korea." Manuscript in the Office of the Chief of Mili-
above quotation, the American presence in South Korea would limit the Soviet expansion in Asia. This view apparently can be linked not only to State Department concern about the Soviet threat in Korea from 1943 on, but also to the subsequent use of the authority of the United Nations to sanction the Republic of Korea in 1948 and to sponsor the intervention in the Korean War in 1950.

During the 1945-1947 period, there seemed to be discord on the Korean policy between Washington's trusteeship plan and the occupation authorities' "containment at the scene." But this was merely a methodological difference. There was no disagreement in principle in preventing Soviet expansion in Korea. As a State Department document stated, the American primary objective in Korea was to prevent Soviet domination rather than Korean unification: "In the American view, freedom from Russian domination is more important than complete independence [of Korea]."

The occupation authorities, from the very early stage of occupation, straightforwardly proceeded to the way of forming "a bulwark against Communism." The official history

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75 In a conference on October 12, 1945, the G-5 for General MacArthur commented to civil affairs officers departing Korea that one of the principal missions of the American occupation of Korea was "to form a bulwark against Com-
of the USAFIK supports this viewpoint:

An orderly, efficiently operated and politically friendly Korea was more important than pleasing and winning the enthusiastic cooperation of all the Korean people.76

Thus, the Occupation authorities suppressed the Left, strengthened the Right, and established native defense forces for the South early in October 1945. And Washington, as the Cold War deepened, came to be tuned more and more to the "containment at the scene" policy of the occupation authorities. Without this context, one can hardly understood why the occupation authorities hastened to create Korean armed forces in the early period of occupation, and how General Hodge, a mere local theater commander, could do so without any clear political directives from Washington. Finally, in his report in late August 1947, Hodge firmly declared that "In my opinion the time for politeness, accepted as weakness by the Communists and by the Russians, is ended."77

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munism." See Meade, American Military Government in Korea, p. 52.


77 From CG USAFIK to CINCFE, J.C.S., ZGCC 1066, 25 August 1947, RG 332, Box 29, p. 4.
B. SEPARATE GOVERNMENT AND THE "BACKDOOR CONTAINMENT."

1947-1950

The three year period from mid-1947 to mid-1950 was the period of the "backdoor containment" for the United States in Korea. Preoccupied by the "Europe first" concepts in terms of political, economic, cultural, ethnic, and psychological ties, the United States wanted to put scarce resources of manpower and materials into Europe where the main confrontation with Soviet power was taking place. Europe has been the front door. But still the United States needed to contain Soviet expansion in the Far East, the backdoor area, with minimum expenses. The "backdoor containment" had such ingredients as follows: establishment of an indigenous government in South Korea friendly to the United States under international sanction; the disengagement of American troops; economic and military aid to stabilize the native government; and revitalization of Japan as the major American security partner in the Far East. This would be an economic way of containment in the strategically less important area. It was, so-to-speak, like the "economy of force" among the principles of war. This is the meaning of the "backdoor containment" in this study.78

78 Stephen Peltz called it "a policy of bluff" that the Americans hoped to protect South Korea with "words and limited aid," but not "deeds." See Stephen Peltz, "U.S. Decisions on Korean Policy, 1945-1950: Some Hypotheses," in Child of Conflict, ed. Cumings, p. 111. For similar accounts that criticize the Truman administra-
The year of 1947 was the year of containment. Containment was openly proclaimed in March 1947 with the Truman Doctrine of aid to Greece and Turkey. However, there was a debate between the State Department and the military departments over the issue of whether containment should be applied to Korea. Whereas the State Department was anxious to apply the containment doctrine to Korea, the military leadership tended to be reluctant arguing that due to the limits of existing military means the United States could not extend its diplomatic commitments in Korea. While the State Department planners warned that withdrawal from Korea would lead to a Communist takeover and a severe blow to American prestige in Asia, the military leaders wanted to redeploy the troops to Europe. The result was that a compromise emerged the form of "backdoor containment."

The American military sensed the limits of American military power after WWII and wondered if Korea were so important in the context of global American security concerns. The military leadership consistently maintained the position that the Korean peninsula had no strategic value to the United States in time of general world conflict. Already in late 1946, during the adjournment of the Soviet-

American Joint Commission, the American military advocated an early withdrawal of troops from Korea in order to redeploy limited manpower and materials in strategically more important areas than Korea. 80 On April 4, 1947, Secretary of War Robert Patterson insisted in his letter to Acheson that "The United States should pursue forcefully a course of action whereby we get out of Korea at an early date" because the Korean occupation was a great drain on the War Department budget. 81 On April 29, 1947, the Joint Strategic Survey Committee, a subcommittee of JCS, placed Korea fifteenth out of sixteen countries in a ranking of states whose security was considered vital to United States national interests. 82 When the SWNCC requested comments on the value of Korea in American national security in late September 1947, the JCS again replied negatively that from the standpoint of military security the United States had little strategic interest in maintaining troops and bases in Korea. They insisted that the American forces in Korea would be a military liability in the case of fighting a general war on the Asian mainland, and that the American

80 Norstad memo, 26 November 1946, RG 319, POD Files, Box 73.

81 The Secretary of War to the Acting Secretary of State, 4 April 1947, FRUS, 1947, VI, pp. 626-627.

82 JCS 1796/1, "United States Assistance to Other Countries from the Standpoint of National Security," 29 April 1947, FRUS, 1947, I, pp. 737-738, 744. See also John Lewis Gaddis, "Was the Truman Doctrine a Real Turning Point?" Foreign Affairs 52 (January 1974), pp. 390-393.
offensive operation could by-pass the Korean peninsula. They concluded, therefore, that "In the light of the present severe shortage of military manpower, the corps of two divisions, totaling some 45,000 men, now maintained in South Korea, could well be used elsewhere...." \(^{83}\)

In the meantime, the State Department wanted to extend the containment policy to Korea. As mentioned before, a concept of containment was there when the State Department planners pushed for occupation of part of the Korean peninsula. \(^{84}\) After the first Joint Commission bogged down, in June 1946, Edwin Pauley made an inspection tour of both north and south Korea as a special envoy of President Truman and reported that: "While Korea is a small country, and in terms of our total military strength is a small responsibility, it is an **ideological battleground** upon which our entire success in Asia may depend." He also warned that Korea was not receiving "the attention and consideration it should." \(^{85}\) In February 1947 a special interdepartmental

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\(^{83}\) JCS to SWNCC, 26 September 1947, *FRUS. 1947, VI*, pp. 817-818; see also Truman, *Years of Trial and Hope*, p. 325.

\(^{84}\) A concept of containment was not confined to the minds of decision-makers. A journalist of the time clearly pointed it out: Edgar Snow, a correspondent for the *Saturday Evening Post*, reported that "Korea is now part of a new American frontier; it is where we rub against Russia's eastern strategic flank." See Edgar Snow, "We Meet Russia in Korea," *Saturday Evening Post* 218 (March 1946), p. 18.

\(^{85}\) Ambassador Edwin W. Pauley to President Truman, 22 June 1946, *FRUS. 1946, VI*, p. 706. Emphasis added. See also
committee, in its report to the secretaries of state and war, advocated keeping South Korea from Soviet control. If South Korea were to fall under Soviet or Soviet-dominated forces, it argued, "the loss of U.S. prestige and influence, and the consequent increase in Soviet influence and power, would have prejudicial repercussions not only on U.S. interests in the Far East but on the entire U.S. world position."86 The original version of this report was more striking in its detail:

Korea... the only place in the world where the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. stand face to face alone.... It is important that there be no gaps or weakening in our policy of firmness in containing the U.S.S.R. because weakness in one area is invariably interpreted by the Soviets as indicative of an overall softening. A backing down or running away from the U.S.S.R. in Korea could very easily result in a stiffening of the Soviet attitude on Germany or some other area of much greater intrinsic importance to us.87

Dean Acheson, Undersecretary of State in Spring of 1947, also advocated extending the containment policy to Korea. At hearings of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee he argued that, while there were parts of the world where the

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Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, pp. 320-322.

86 "Draft Report of Special Inter-Departmental Committee on Korea," 25 February 1947, FRUS, 1947, VI, p. 612. For the more details, see pp. 610-618, 738-741; and Millis, Forrestal Diaries, p. 273.

United States could not do anything effective, there were other places where it could be effective in containing the Soviets. According to him, "One of them is Korea" because "the line has been clearly drawn between the Russians and ourselves" in Korea.\footnote{United States Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, \textit{Hearing: A Bill to Provide for Assistance to Greece and Turkey}, 80th Congress, 1st session (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1973), p. 22.} Clearly, Acheson mentioned that Korea was a logical and prominent area for application of the Truman Doctrine.

A key military figure also took similar stance. Lieutenant General Albert C. Wedemeyer reported, from his fact-finding visit to China and Korea in mid-July 1947, that a withdrawal of all American assistance from Korea "would cost the United States an immense loss in moral prestige among the people of Asia." He thus recommended that, even though it would be a military liability to station American troops in Korea, "every possible opportunity must be used to seize the initiative in order to create and maintain bulwarks of freedom."\footnote{"Report to the President on China-Korea. Submitted by Lieutenant General Albert C. Wedemeyer, 19 September 1947, \textit{FRUS, 1947}, VI, pp. 796-803. Emphasis added. See also Truman, \textit{Years of Trial and Hope}, p. 326.}

Thus the State and War Department planners searched for a compromise--a strategy that would allow the United States to withdraw militarily from South Korea without giving up the area to Soviet domination. On July 23, 1947, at the
time of another deadlock of the second Joint Commission, the SWNCC formed the Ad Hoc Committee on Korea to formulate a viable policy recommendation. As a result, a report named SWNCC 176/30 was produced on August 4. The report confirmed the American intention of containment in Korea as follows:

The U.S. cannot at this time withdraw from Korea under circumstances which would inevitably lead to Communist domination of the entire country. The resulting political repercussions would seriously damage U.S. prestige in the Far East and throughout the world, and would discourage those to support them in resisting internal or external Communist pressure.  

It made several recommendations such as submitting the Korean problem to the United Nations, granting independence to South Korea in case of failure to get a Soviet cooperation in forming a unified Korean government under United Nations auspices, and arrangements of a positive program of political and economic help and assistance to South Korea.  

On September 17, 1947, as a first step of the "backdoor containment," the United States requested the United Nations to include the problem of the Korean independence on the agenda for the current General Assembly Session.  

90 Report by the Ad Hoc Committee on Korea, SWNCC 176/30, 4 August 1947, PRUS. 1947, VI, p. 738.

91 For the details, see ibid., pp. 738-741.

92 New York Times, 18 September 1947, p 3. For the details of the American request, see Department of State Bulletin (28 September 1947), pp. 618-624; and Marshall’s
As the American planners foresaw, this was an official starting point for a separate southern government in Korea.

Around this time, General Hodge expressed his regret toward the inept trusteeship idea and confessed that he already looked toward a separate government. He said: "In my opinion, and in the opinion of most of us who have studied this problem and have been here, we are at least a year and a half behind...behind what we could have been if we had not been tied to the non-functioning Moscow Decision.... On the other hand, we might have worked toward a permanently separated South Korea. It may be that this is already a fact.... In other words, we might build up in this area a nuisance value of resistance to the Russian Control." 93

Actually already in June 1946, right after the adjournment of the first Joint Commission, Syngman Rhee publicly spoke of a separate government for South Korea.94 In speech text on Korea, RG 332, Box 28.

93 "Orientation For Draper," RG 332, Box 29, p.17. In this briefing conference for the undersecretary of the Army, Jacobs, Hodge’s advisor and a member of the Joint Commission, more clearly advocated a separate government: "We have wasted 18 months or two year--not wasted--but just lost...so we ought to make up our minds what we are going to do one way or another.... [Al]nd then forget about United Korea until some day in the future.... In other words, the resolution that we have introduced [to the UN] for all Korea would be left applicable to only south Koreans." See ibid., p. 26.

94 On June 3, Rhee advocated the establishment of an independent South Korean government during a speech at Chǒng’up, North Chǒlla Province. See Song, Haebang
December 1946, Rhee went to the United States to campaign for a separate government with assistance of a group of lobbyists such as Robert T. Oliver, John W. Staggers, and J. Jerome Williams. During his stay in America, Rhee sent Truman a letter praising the Truman Doctrine that "Korea is located in a strategic situation similar to that of Greece and the Korean patriots are greatly encouraged in their fight for freedom by your inspiring message."\(^{95}\)

It is not clear whether this letter had any effect on the course of American containment policy in Korea. But Rhee’s die-hard effort of campaigning for a separate southern government began to gain momentum from mid-1947 as the second Joint Commission again bogged down. On September 15, two days before American referral of the Korean problem to the UN, Louise Yim (Yim Yong-sin), a member of the Korean observer team in the UN and a loyal follower of Rhee, urged in a press statement that the United States establish immediately an interim, independent South Korean government. She argued that "it also would enable two-thirds of the Korean people to prepare for the threatened Communist breakthroughs along the 38th parallel."\(^{96}\) On October 1, 

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\(^{96}\) Dr. Syngman Rhee to President Truman, 13 March 1947, FRUS, 1947, VI, p. 620.

Rhee went further in his separate government campaign saying that "Koreans are at least determined to hold a general election and form a government even in the American zone either with or without cooperation of the American Military Government." 97

At last, on November 14, 1947, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution creating the United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea (UNTCOK) to supervise elections throughout the country for the establishment of a unified and independent government. 98 The UNTCOOK held its first meeting in Seoul on January 12, 1948, and called for cooperations from the military commanders in both zones. However, the Soviet Union refused to permit the UNTCOOK members to enter North Korea. As SWNCC 176/30 report recommended, in the case of failure to get Soviet cooperation, the next step for the United States to take would be a unilateral separate government for South Korea. On February 17, 1948, Marshall sent a message to Warren Austin, Ambassador to the UN, that indicated the American position: "Interim Committee [of the UN] should advice KC[the UNTCOOK] to get on with its job and observe elections in such parts of Korea as are open to it." 99 The UN Interim Committee adopted a resolu-

97 Ibid., 1 October 1947, p. 1.


99 Marshall to Austin, 17 February 1948, FRUS, 1948, VI, p. 1117.
tion on February 26, 1948, directing the UNTOK to implement elections "in such parts of Korea as are accessible to the Commission." 100

As the separate government process was upholding step by step, the political situation in South Korea was boiling again. While Rhee and his rightist groups unanimously supported an immediate southern election, the Leftists, the moderates, and the nationalists groups opposed the separate election. Particularly, the nationalist leaders such as Kim Koo and Kim Kyu-sik strongly opposed such a separate southern election, fearing that it would lead to a permanent division of Korea. They advocated a North-South political leaders conference before a UN-observed election. However, there was already no room to prevent the advent of two Koreas, since both occupation powers had gone too far to return and had already consolidated their zones along their politico-ideological philosophies. Even though the two Kims went to P'yŏngyang in late April 1948 to participate in a conference to discuss the unification of Korea, the two patriots returned with empty hands but deep disappointment. The P'yŏngyang conference was no more than a Communist propaganda gathering. 101


101 For one of the most thorough assessments on the "North-South political conference," see Song, Haebang samnyŏn-sa, Vol. II, pp. 513-568. Song was the personal secre-
On May 10, 1948, the UNTCOK supervised the general election in South Korea. The newly elected National Assembly adopted a constitution on July 12, and elected Syngman Rhee as the first president of the new government on July 20.  
102 With the inauguration of the Republic of Korea (Taehan min'guk: ROK) on August 15, 1948, the American command terminated its military government in South Korea.  
103 Thus, the basis for the "backdoor containment" had been set up.

At the same time as the UN proposal regarding the Korean problem, American policy makers began to examine more seriously the troop withdrawal from Korea. Moreover, on September 26, 1947, the Soviet Union offered immediate mutual military withdrawal from Korea as a substitution for American proposal to the UN, arguing that the Korean people could then resolve their own differences.  
104 The issue of troop withdrawal, therefore, would be a fait accompli sooner or later. But the Americans could not withdraw immediately.

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102 Already in June, Hodge's G-2 predicted that Rhee would become president. Corps Staff Conference, 22 June 1948, RG 332, Box 28.

103 "United States Military Government in Korea" was redesignated as the "Civil Affairs Group." See General Orders 30 and 31, USAFIK, 15 August 1948, RG 332, Box 41.

ately because South Korea was not strong enough economically and militarily to stand against a possible threat from North Korea.

During the period from late 1947 to early 1948, there were a number of proposals and discussions to set up actual preconditions for American troop withdrawal. However, the military and the State Department took different approaches toward solving the problem. The military leaders emphasized financial assistance for economic self-sufficiency of Korea as the precondition for the troop withdrawal. For instance, the JCS stressed the urgency of an economic and political rehabilitation program for South Korea. If Congress supported a rehabilitation program, another military source argued, the United States could build an "ideological bridgehead on the Asian mainland" without permanent and unprofitable liability—i.e., troop station. Meanwhile, the State Department officials urged immediate shipment of arms to Korea and more thorough military training for the Koreans.

Finally, the National Security Council set up a plan

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105 JCS to SWNCC, 26 September 1947, FRUS, 1947, VI, pp. 817-818.

106 Department of the Army memo, 23 September 1947, RG 319, POD Files, decimal file 091, Korea, Box 89.

that would enable the United States to disengage militarily from Korea as soon as possible with a minimum of bad effects. The NSC 8, approved by Truman on April 8, 1948, set up the time table of troop withdrawal by the end of 1948. It also recommended that the United States provide $185 million in economic aid to Korea for fiscal year of 1949 and sustain a small constabulary force capable of protecting South Korea against "any but an overt act of aggression by north Korea or other forces." 108 The NSC 8 became the governing Korean policy guide through the entire year of 1948.

However, a severe leftist rebellion in the Yŏsu-Sunch'ŏn area of southwestern Korea in October 1948 revived the debate over the withdrawal issue. The State Department officials who resisted a hasty withdrawal argued that the new Republic could not withstand political and military pressure from North Korea without sustained American protection. 109 John Muccio, the first American ambassador to the ROK, also insisted in his reports that only continued American military occupation could prevent the complete demise of the Republic. 110 On March 22, 1949, the National

108 For the full contents of NSC 8, see Sidney Souers to Harry S. Truman, 2 April 1948, FRUS 1948, VIII, pp. 1163-1169.


110 Muccio to Marshall, 26 October 1948, 4 and 12 November 1948, FRUS, 1948, VIII, pp. 1325-1327.
Security Council submitted to Truman the NSC 8/2, the revised report of NSC 8, in which the NSC set June 30 as the final date for complete withdrawal. It also recommended raising a Korean army of 65,000 men, a coast guard of 4,000 men, and a police force of 35,000 men. The United States would equip these forces with light weapons.\footnote{111} President Truman approved it the next day.

Another important ingredient of the "backdoor containment," besides the establishment of a separate southern government and the withdrawal of American troops, was the issue of economic aid. As the ROK government was established, the United States hoped to bring about an economic recovery in Korea to create political stability. As NSC 8 already indicated, economic aid was also closely connected with the troop disengagement. An economic aid program was a substitution for American troops in Korea. That was the meaning of the phrase "with the minimum of bad effects," for the troop withdrawal.\footnote{112}

On June 7, 1949, President Truman sent to Congress a bill, known as the Korea Assistance Act of 1949, asking to grant of $150 million for Korea for fiscal year 1950. However, the Truman administration's policy that the United

\footnote{111}{NSC 8/2, Report by the National Security Council to the President, Position of the United States with Respect to Korea, 22 March 1947, \textit{FRUS, 1949}, VII, Part II, pp. 969-978.}

\footnote{112}{NSC 8, \textit{FRUS, 1948}, VI, p. 1168.}
States would not defend Taiwan killed the original bill, due to pro-Chiang Kai-shek congressmen's refusal to pass it.\textsuperscript{113} And then Senate Republicans suggested the administration trade aid to Korea for continued economic support of Chiang and Taiwan. The Truman administration conceded and offered the Far Eastern Economic Assistance Act of 1950 instead of the original bill for Korea.\textsuperscript{114} Even though the new bill was eventually passed in late February, 1950, it could not help ease the collapsing Korean economy because of its reduced amount from $150 million to $60 million and, more significantly, because of its delay. The North Koreans attacked before the money was available.

One final factor in examining "backdoor containment," not directly connected to Korea, though, was the revitalization of Japan. As shown at the beginning of this Chapter, in the minds of some key policymakers like Forrestal, the overall concept of containment relied on some sort of balance of power vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. For this purpose the United States needed a strong alliance with a major state in the Far East. Up until mid-1947 China was the


prime candidate. However, the ailing regime of Chiang Kai-shek was losing in the civil war against the Communists. From the second half of 1947, thus, the United States shifted to Japan. The Policy Planning Staff, headed by George F. Kennan, reported on November 6, 1947, that "the political and economic stability which Japanese society would require if it was to withstand communist pressure after we had gone." Another PPS report, dated February 24, 1948, clearly stated that "Japan and the Philippines will be found to be the corner-stones of such a Pacific security system."

With the plan of Japanese rebuilding, Korea came to have a triple significance: strategically, symbolically, and economically. Strategically, Korea was to be an outpost to guarantee the Japanese security more securely. Calling for reexamination of NSC 8, a key official in the State Department argued: "Should communist domination of the entire Korean peninsula become an accomplished fact, the islands of Japan would be surrounded on three sides by an unbroken


arc of communist territories... in Sakhalin and the Kuriles in the northeast and communist positions in southern Korea in the southwest."\textsuperscript{117}

Symbolically, Korea was a showcase through which the United States had to confirm its determination to other allies. This view was repeatedly emphasized by many reports and policy papers concerning the Korean problem. For instance, NSC 8 in April 1948 stated that, should an American withdrawal be followed by a Soviet takeover in South Korea it would be interpreted "as a betrayal by the U.S. of its friends and allies in the Far East...."\textsuperscript{118}

Economically, Korea would be a trading partner of Japan. In an effort to prop up the Korea Assistance Act of 1949, Paul Hoffman, Chief Administrator of the Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA), argued that "in helping Korea we are also helping Japan.... The Japanese economy needs support from outside sources and Korea is one of the natural complementary trading areas."\textsuperscript{119} An economically strong and stable South Korea would bring a revitalized Japan into the American orbit. Now, the United States should keep its commitments in Korea, at least for the purpose of Japanese rebuilding.

\textsuperscript{117} Draft Memorandum Submitted to the Director of the Office of Far Eastern Affairs, \textit{FRUS, 1948. VI}, p. 1338.

\textsuperscript{118} NSC 8, 2 April 1948, \textit{ibid.}, p. 1167.

In retrospect, during the period from mid-1947 to mid-1950, the United States tried to apply containment policy in Korea. However, it was a "backdoor containment"--a secondary one at the minor battlefront. The Americans needed to concentrate their physical forces into Europe, the major battlefront. They wanted to disengage the troops from Korea for that purpose. NSC 48/1, issued in late December 1949, clearly revealed the character and limits of containment in Korea:

It is essential that a successful strategic defense in the "East" be assured with a minimum expenditure of military manpower and material in order that the major effort may be expended in the "West." 120

Instead of troop presence the United States tried to build up an indigenous bulwark against Communist expansion by establishing a friendly separate government in South Korea, with the sanction of international agreement in the name of the UN. The Americans hoped that the international auspice for the ROK would prevent the Soviet Union from resorting to overall open aggression against the Republic. And the latent subversion and political penetration, they expected, could be handled by the ROK with America's limited economic and military assistance. 121 This was the logic of the "backdoor containment."}

120 NSC 48/1, 23 December 1949, as quoted in Gaddis, "Korea in U.S. Politics," pp. 286-287.

121 Kennan, Memoirs, p. 485; Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, p. 331.
However, things were not going well as the way that the Truman administration hoped. The Communists attacked against the "screened front" in June 1950. The Americans could not but use their physical forces to contain the Communists.\textsuperscript{122}

\textsuperscript{122} On June 27, 1949, at the eve of the final disengagement of American troops from Korea, the Department of Army already drafted a course of actions in the event of a possible full scale invasion from North Korea subsequent to withdrawal: 1) emergency evacuation of American nationals; 2) presentation of the problem to the UN Security Council; and 3) initiation police action with UN sanction. \textit{FRUS, 1949, VII, Part II, pp. 1046-1048}. These were the steps that the United States actually took at the time of the Korean War broke out.
CHAPTER III
THE ORGANIZATION OF THE NATIONAL DEFENSE SYSTEM

Despite the administrative errors of the occupation authorities, American basic occupation policy—to form a bulwark to stem the tide of Soviet-inspired and domestic revolution in South Korea—was exceptionally firm and remarkably consistent even in the first four months of the occupation. In actuality, the Americans faced strong leftist organizations, such as the people's committees, peasant associations, and the Korean People's Republic, from the first stage of the occupation. These leftist groups were deeply rooted particularly in the Honam area (the southwest part of the peninsula), a granary of Korea.\footnote{Meade, American Military Government in Korea, ch. 7; Cumings, The Origins of the Korean War, chs. 8, 9.} To guarantee a South Korea free of Soviet influence or control under these conditions, General Hodge and his advisors tried to establish firm bureaucratic, police, and military structures in cooperation with Korean rightist organizations. The "containment at the scene" policy held by the occupation authorities received support from several prominent containment advocates such as John J. McCloy, George
F. Kennan, Dean Rusk, and Averell Harriman. In fact, even though there was some apparent debate between containment advocates and trusteeship idealists on the method of achieving it, the principle of effective control of Korea or a part of it was essential in the postwar American policy toward Korea. Therefore, facing the pressure of strong leftist organizations, the occupation authorities had to protect South Korea from revolution at home in the short run and to make it a bulwark against Communism in the long run.

On September 17, 1945, the occupation authorities established a Bureau of Police at the national level under the direction of Brigadier General Lawrence E. Schick, Provost Marshal General of the XXIV Corps. But the newly established Korean National Police (KNP) could not solve even minor disorders in the provinces without the support of American troops. The occupation authorities, therefore, decided to establish Korean military forces that could support the KNP and serve as a defense force in an emergency.

On October 31, 1945, General Schick wrote a memorandum for General Archibald V. Arnold, Military Governor, entitled "Plan for the National Defense of Korea," in which he claimed that provision "for the National Defense is one of the primary functions of government." He recommended creating a force capable of quelling internal disturbances and

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2 Cumings, ibid., pp. 229-230.
suitable for defending South Korean borders, and to establish an agency for coordinating the KNP and the Korean armed forces. Thus on November 13, 1945, the occupation authorities established the Office of the Director of National Defense with jurisdiction over the Bureau of Police and over a new Bureau of Armed Forces, comprising the Army and Navy Departments. General Schick became the director on the following day.

The basic function of the Office of the Director of National Defense was to manage "recruiting, organization, training and equipping of the required armed forces on land and sea." The new Korean armed forces was basically designated to assist civilian police in maintaining civil peace and security. But the occupation authorities foresaw a much broader potentialities in the creation of the Korean armed forces. Hodge recalled that "I was very interested in establishing a Korean Army from the beginning of the Occupation, not only to relieve American troops of many details in handling Korean security, but to get a start for the

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3 Sawyer, Military Advisors in Korea, p. 9.


5 Press Releases, 15 November 1945, Item 1, RG 332, Box 27; "History of DIS," RG 332, Box 41, p. 4; SCAP, Monthly Summary, No. 2 (November 1945), Part V, p. 3.
future when we accomplished our mission of setting up a Korean Government." 6 An official record also indicated that the planned reorganization of the Office of the Director of National Defense would prepare the groundwork for the creation of the armed forces necessary to the "existence of Korea as an independent nation." 7 The occupation authorities actually envisioned a future national defense force for Korea.

The USAFIK board of officers under the Office of the Director of National Defense produced a plan for a national defense program. This plan envisioned an army and air force of 45,000, a navy and coast guard of 5,000, and a national police force of 25,000. 8 General Hodge approved this plan on November 20, and General MacArthur forwarded it to Washington seeking the judgment of the State Department and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. 9

However, the creation of a national Korean army was a delicate issue at the early stage of the occupation. The Washington authorities replied that a decision would be postponed until after the Joint Soviet-American Commission’s negotiations were held according to the Moscow

6 Hodge to Orlando Ward, 18 March 1952, as cited in Sawyer, Military Advisors in Korea, p. 21.


8 Sawyer, Military Advisors in Korea, p. 10.

9 Ibid., p. 11.
agreement. According to a message from JCS to MacArthur's headquarters on January 9, 1946:

The matter of establishing "Korean National Armed Forces" is closely allied to unsettled problems connected with international commitments for implementing Korean independence. Action to establish such force will therefore be deferred.10

Apparently the United States did not wish to risk a misunderstanding with the Soviets.

The other reasoning of the ill feeling of the American government to fostering of a large military organization on Korean soil might be rested on a traditional American political philosophy. The American people traditionally regarded a large standing army as a threat to liberty, that was an English heritage stemmed from Oliver Cromwell's military dictatorship. An official report argued that it was necessary to wait "until the general trend of the Korean mind ran in lines parallel to Democratic thought" before any strong armed force could be formed, since a force of this sort, unless its loyalties were with the government, could cause an unlimited amount of trouble.11

Thus, the occupation authorities could not but seek another way of providing South Korea with increased internal security forces. This alternative was the so-called "Bamboo" plan, which envisaged a constabulary-type police

10 Message from JCS to MacArthur, 9 January 1946, FRUS, 1945, VI, p. 1157.

11 "History of DIS," RG 332, Box 41, p. 6.
reserve. According to this plan, one company would be formed in each of the eight provinces of South Korea. Each company would consist of 6 officers and 225 enlisted men based on the American style infantry company, minus a weapons platoon. To select training areas and to begin recruiting, teams of two officers and four enlisted men were sent out each province. In each province the initial company would be formed overstrength by approximately 20 percent. This surplus, after a short period of training, would be the nucleus of a second company. In the same manner, the surplus of the second company would be a cadre for a third. Thus, at that time a battalion headquarters and a headquarters company would be formed, and thereafter second and third battalions would be activated in a gradual expansion to one regiment of the Constabulary in each province. 12

On January 14, 1945, the American Military Government established Nam-chosŏn kukpang kyŏngbidae [The South Korean Constabulary], and began to recruit on the day following. Initially, Company A of the First Regiment for the Seoul area established its camp at Kyŏngki-do Yangju-gun Nohae-myŏn T'aenŭng (present KMA site), a former Japanese barracks. Recruiting for the First Regiment run without much trouble so that by the end of January three companies had

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12 Sawyer, Military Advisors in Korea, pp. 13-14; Interview, General Yi Ung-jun (6 April 1976). General Yi said that he advised General Arthur S. Champeny, who had succeeded General Schick on December 20, 1945, as Director of National Defense, in shaping of the plan "Bamboo."
been formed. 13

But recruiting in the other provinces was not so successful. According to the Bamboo plan each provincial regiment was responsible for recruiting its own constabulary-men. On January 28, 1946, the Office of the Director of National Defense dispatched Korean officers who graduated from the English Language School to each province for recruiting. Allocations were as follows: Captain Yi Hyŏng-kŭn for South Ch’ungch’ŏng Province; 1st Lieutenant Kim Hong-jun for South Chŏlla Province; 2nd Lieutenant Sim ᄀŏn-bong for South Kyŏngsang Province; 2nd Lieutenant Kim Yŏng-hwan for North Kyŏngsang Province; 2nd Lieutenant Min Ki-sik for North Ch’ungch’ŏng Province; 2nd Lieutenant Kim Chong-o for North Chŏlla Province; and 2nd Lieutenant Pak Pyŏng-kwŏn for Kangwŏn Province. 14 By April 1946, eight regiments were formed with a total strength of only 2,406 men. 15 At the end of November, however, the strength reached 143 officers and 5,130 enlisted men. 16

In the meantime, there were several changes in the Korean defense structure during the first half of 1946. On March 29, the Military Government separated the Bureau of

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15 USAPPAC, Summation, No. 7 (April 1946), p. 12.
16 Ibid., No. 14 (November 1946), p. 29.
Police from the Office of the Director of National Defense. In April, with the redesignation of major governmental elements renaming from Bureaus to Departments, the Office of the Director of National Defense became the Department of National Defense [Kukpang-bu].

In June, however, indications of Soviet sensitivity to the use of the "national defense" designation brought a change in the title. General Hodge later reported that "I met with much opposition at higher levels apparently in the belief that at that stage of our relations such a move might be misunderstood by the Russians and be a source of difficulty when it came to the coordination of the American and Russian zones of Korea into a single nation." The Department of National Defense, thus, was renamed the Department of Internal Security [Kungnae kyŏngbi-bu]. The Bureau of Armed Forces with its subordinate Army and Navy Departments was abolished, and instead the new Bureaus of Constabulary and Coast Guard were set up. But Koreans who joined the Constabulary, disliking the name of the Department of Internal Security, called it as T'ongwi-bu

17 USAMGIK, Ordinance, No. 63, 29 March 1946.
18 Ibid., No. 64, 8 April 1946.
19 Sawyer, Military Advisors in Korea, p. 21.
20 "History of DIS," RG 332, Box 41, p. 9.
21 USAMGIK, Ordinance, No. 86, 15 January 1946; USAFPAC, Summation, No. 9 (June 1946), p. 21.
(Imperial Korea's Department of National Defense). They identified themselves not as the police reserve, but as the main body of national defense.\textsuperscript{22}

The table of organization of the Department of Internal Security was as follows.

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
  \node (director) at (0,0) {Director of Internal Security};
  \node (deputy) at (0,-1) {Deputy Director and Executive Officer};
  \node (personnel) at (-2,-2) {Personnel Officer};
  \node (intelligence) at (0,-2) {Intelligence and Investigation Officer};
  \node (plans) at (2,-2) {Plans Training and Operations Officer};
  \node (logistics) at (2,-3) {Logistics Officer};
  \node (administrative) at (-2,-4) {Administrative Officer};
  \node (legal) at (-2,-5) {Legal Officer};
  \node (finance) at (2,-4) {Finance Officer};
  \node (bureau1) at (-2,-6) {Bureau of Korean Constabulary};
  \node (bureau2) at (0,-6) {Bureau of Korean Coast Guard};
  \node (bureau3) at (2,-6) {Bureau of Korean Supply Service};

  \draw (director) -- (deputy);
  \draw (deputy) -- (personnel);
  \draw (deputy) -- (intelligence);
  \draw (deputy) -- (plans);
  \draw (deputy) -- (logistics);
  \draw (deputy) -- (administrative);
  \draw (deputy) -- (legal);
  \draw (deputy) -- (finance);
  \draw (deputy) -- (bureau1);
  \draw (deputy) -- (bureau2);
  \draw (deputy) -- (bureau3);
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}


---

The basic functions of the three bureaus were defined as follows:

1. The Korean Constabulary is a Bureau established on a post-camp-station basis as a force to support the Department of police when so directed by the Military Governor, and for employment during periods of national emergency. The mission of the Korean Constabulary is to furnish a reserve force for employment when necessary to support and reinforce the Police in maintaining Civil Law and order throughout that portion of Korea occupied by American forces. Until such time as a national army is established under a national government, the Korean Constabulary serves in a general war as the basis of a military force.

2. The Korean Coast Guard is a Bureau established to prevent smuggling between Korea and nearby countries and islands; to police coastal waters; to handle coastal rescue work in marine disasters; and to guard known mine fields.

3. The Korean Supply Service is a Bureau established to support the logistic needs of the Korean Constabulary and the Korean Coast Guard.23

In September 1946, another major change in the military government policy came to affect on the defense system. It was the so-called "Koreanization," shifting of administrative authority to the Korean personnel. From September 11, Korean directors of the military government departments and bureaus became solely responsible for administration and their American counterparts assumed advisory functions.24

23 USAMGIK, Office of Administration, Manual of Military Government Organization and Function, RG 332, Box 5, p. 57. See also "History of DIS," RG 332, Box 41, pp. 11-12, 15-16.

Therefore, all American officers assigned to the Department of Internal Security, including those with constabulary units, entered an advisory capacity. All communications, orders, directives, requests, memos, and so forth, to units of the constabulary were to be forwarded through the Korean chief. The official language was to be Korean, however English translations were to accompany all important documents. On September 24, Major Yi Hyŏng-kŭn became the acting chief of the constabulary.

In the early stage of its development, the Korean Constabulary had several problems. First, since the military government authorities regarded the constabulary as a police reserve rather than a national army, the Americans trained the Constabulary only in the use of small arms, basic drill, and methods of internal security. For instance, they emphasized techniques of riot suppression instead of operations to defend borders. Furthermore, the procurement of equipment was not easy except for small arms. Originally, at the time of their creation, Constabulary units at each province were to be equipped with abandoned Japanese weapons and equipment by local military government groups. But the occupation authorities were then

26 Ibid., p. 21; interview with General Yi Hyŏng-kŭn (14 May 1977).
27 "History of DIS," RG 332, Box 41, pp. 5, 8, 13.
in the midst of a program of destroying Japanese arms. Occupation Instruction No. 2, issued by General MacArthur's headquarters in September 1945, had directed them to destroy Japanese equipment appropriate for warlike uses except for what might be used for intelligence and research purposes or as souvenirs.28

Second, there was ill feeling between the police and the Constabulary. As it grew in strength and prestige, for instance, the Constabulary often indulged in conflict with the police over jurisdictional matters. These strained feelings were rooted mainly in professional jealousy. While the policemen regarded the constabularymen as their "assistants," as they were in principle, the constabularymen were full of conceit about being the nucleus of a future national army. In the fall of 1947, a gunfight even occurred between a Constabulary company and the police of Yong-am in South Cholla Province.29

Third, there were inadequacies and some confusion in the process of Constabulary training. With the rapid demobilization and redeployment of the United States Army after

28 Sawyer, Military Advisors in Korea, p. 16.

29 In October 1947 conferences were held by representatives of the National Police, the Constabulary, and the Coast Guard, to try to allay the growing ill-feeling between the police and the other two organizations. The chief topic of discussion was the exact function of each. USAMGIK, National Economic Board, South Korean Interim Government Activities, No. 25 (October 1947), p. 135. Hereafter USAMGIK, Interim Activities.
World War II, there were steady decreases in and frequent replacements of American advisors with the Constabulary. During the September 1946-April 1948 period, the number of advisors to the Constabulary fluctuated from four to ten, with the average around six.\textsuperscript{30} And, in less than seven months from November 1945, five directors of National Defense were changed.\textsuperscript{31} The weakness of the advisory sys-

\textsuperscript{30} Sawyer, \textit{Military Advisors in Korea}, p. 23. According to the following table, those trends of steady diminishing of American military personnel were obvious.

\textbf{MILITARY GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL IN SOUTH KOREA}
\textbf{OCTOBER 1946 - 15 AUGUST 1948}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Officers</th>
<th>Enlisted Men</th>
<th>Civilians</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct</td>
<td>958</td>
<td>2,330</td>
<td>433</td>
<td>3,721</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov</td>
<td>932</td>
<td>2,512</td>
<td>491</td>
<td>3,935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec</td>
<td>870</td>
<td>2,376</td>
<td>520</td>
<td>3,766</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan</td>
<td>869</td>
<td>2,518</td>
<td>570</td>
<td>3,957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb</td>
<td>851</td>
<td>2,428</td>
<td>589</td>
<td>3,868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar</td>
<td>835</td>
<td>2,211</td>
<td>599</td>
<td>3,645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr</td>
<td>715</td>
<td>1,844</td>
<td>623</td>
<td>3,182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>688</td>
<td>1,784</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>3,096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun</td>
<td>656</td>
<td>1,898</td>
<td>643</td>
<td>3,197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul</td>
<td>592</td>
<td>1,789</td>
<td>669</td>
<td>3,050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug</td>
<td>563</td>
<td>1,683</td>
<td>655</td>
<td>2,891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep</td>
<td>534</td>
<td>1,641</td>
<td>651</td>
<td>2,826</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>1,376</td>
<td>682</td>
<td>2,558</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov</td>
<td>483</td>
<td>1,393</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>2,626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>1,315</td>
<td>794</td>
<td>2,580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>1,450</td>
<td>839</td>
<td>2,757</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb</td>
<td>482</td>
<td>1,230</td>
<td>871</td>
<td>2,583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>1,322</td>
<td>954</td>
<td>2,740</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr</td>
<td>547</td>
<td>1,469</td>
<td>1,052</td>
<td>3,041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>501</td>
<td>1,481</td>
<td>1,017</td>
<td>3,003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun</td>
<td>441</td>
<td>1,742</td>
<td>995</td>
<td>3,178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>1,691</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>2,958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug 15</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>1,669</td>
<td>857</td>
<td>2,870</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

tem resulted in a dearth of American supervision and advice. Moreover, language problems made it difficult to implement American training methods. Consequently the Constabulary's training relied largely on the Korean officers who had gained their military knowledge and experience in the Japanese or Chinese Armies. Aside from the question of effectiveness, their training methods apparently conflicted with the doctrine taught by the Americans.

Finally, the biggest problem was that the Constabulary came to include leftists. Some of the Constabulary units were composed almost entirely of members of former leftist private armies. In fact, since the Constabulary had to operate on a shoestring basis and therefore the recruiting standards were low, physically healthy leftist applicants had little difficulty in getting into the Constabulary. Korean constabulary leaders continuously requested of American officers that new recruits have their political loyalties examined. However, despite the military government authorities fear of leftist power in South Korea, they

31 Sawyer, Military Advisors in Korea, p. 20.

refused such thought control. They officially advocated the slogans of "pul-p'yŏn pu-dang" (impartial and nonpartisan). Despite their basic objective of making Korea a bulwark against Communism, the Americans seemed not to be fully aware at that time of the reality of Communism. For instance, even William Langdon, who was a State Department advisor in Seoul, complained to the Secretary of State that the Military Government excluded "popular left wingers." As a result, leftists could infiltrate the Constabulary, including the Officer Training School. Eventually the newborn Republic of Korea had to pay harsh compensation in the rebels of Yŏsu and Sunch'ŏn provoked by leftist soldiers in 1948.

In spite of problems, the Constabulary made steady progress, particularly in its size. By the time of its rebirth as the Republic of Korea Army in September 1948, the strength of the Constabulary had reached approximately 50,000 men. Thus, the American Military Government succeeded in building one of the most important pillars

33 Ibid., pp. 265-266; Interview, General Yi Hyŏng-kŭn (14 May 1977).

34 "Langdon to the Secretary of State," 26 November 1945, FRUS. 1945, VI, p. 1135.

35 However, the Americans provided equipment and trainings to the Korean Army primarily for defense and internal security, lest the South Koreans use their armed forces in an aggressive manner that might involve the United States in a war. Sawyer, Military Advisors in Korea, pp. 28-30; The Korea Military Academy, A History of the Korean War (Seoul, : Sinhak-sa, 1978), pp. 12-14.
against Communism in Korea, but designed it for internal police work.
CHAPTER IV
THE FIRST SEED OF THE OFFICER CORPS

A. ORIGINS OF THE KOREAN ARMY OFFICER CORPS

In general, the development of the military as an institution and as a profession closely paralleled the development of the military schools, particularly the officer training institutes. This parallelism reflects the fact that the officer corps is the nucleus of any armed force.

The armed forces of the Republic of Korea started their development under unique circumstances. First of all, in Korea, there was a great gap between the collapse of the ancient regime and the establishment of the new military. There was a nearly forty year gulf from the disbandment of the Imperial Korean Army by the Japanese on July 31, 1907, and the creation of the Korean Constabulary by the American Military Government on January 15, 1946. This gap eventually gave the new Korean army quite different characteristics from Western standards for an army. For instance, particularly in Europe, there was no discontinuity between the collapse of the ancient regime in France and the emergence of the new officer corps, whose members were of the bour-
geois class who had received formal military education and organizational training. However, under the Japanese colonial rule, there was no real middle class in Korea, nor had there been under the ancient regime of the Yi Dynasty.

The Japanese colonial period did not provide a bridge transferring Korea from an ancient society to a modern one, particularly in terms of social stratification. Rather, it functioned retrogressively. During the Japanese colonial period, the numbers of Korean tenants increased steadily and the number of Japanese landowners increased.¹ Consequently there was a small aristocratic class based on land ownership and a large tenant proletariat. Therefore, after the liberation, the new Korean army came to have an officer corps whose members came mainly from the lower classes. Compared with their Western counterparts, the Korean army officers became relatively less conservative, thus more active in improving their social and political environment. This might be one of the major reasons that the Korean army officer corps entered the political arena in times of social and political crisis.

Next, cadres of the Korean armed forces had a strong sense of national independence. The Korean armed forces were disbanded and recreated by foreign hands. This, on the

¹ Korean tenants increased from 41.7 percent in 1913 to 65.0 percent (80.0 percent including part-owners/part-tenants) in 1943. Cumings, The Origins of the Korea War, p. 43, Table 2.
contrary, quickened the Korean officers' strong sense of nationalism. For example, when the American Military Government changed the name of its defense branch in June of 1946 from the "Department of National Defense" to the "Department of Internal Security," responding to Soviet sensitivity to the meaning of "national defense." Koreans instead called it as T'ongwi-bu (the meaning is Department of National Defense of the Imperial Korean periods). Moreover, Koreans who joined the Constabulary identified themselves not as the police reserve, but as the main body of national defense of the liberated motherland.

However, there was a significant problem in the creation of the new officer corps of the Korean army. It was the variety of the military backgrounds of potential officer candidates. During the Japanese colonial period, Korean military activities could be placed into two categories. One was anti-Japanese armed resistance, and the other was pro-Japanese military service.

The former category included Ŭi-byŏng [The Righteous Army], old royal army soldiers, the Independence Army, the Kwangbok-kun [the Restoration Army], and various other guerrilla groups. Usually scholar-aristocrats led Ŭi-byŏng movements, the quasi-guerrilla movement in the provinces, particularly before the famous Samil tongnip undong [the March 1 Independence Movement] on March 1, 1919. On March
1, 1919, the Declaration of Korean Independence, signed by thirty-three national leaders, was released:

Our country is a sovereign state and the Korean people have the right to self-determination. We assert our independence for the sake of our nation's free development as of old and we demand our independence in order that we can keep pace with the great movement of world reform based on the revolution of humane conscience....

The nature of the Samil Independence Movement, however, was peaceful. The Declaration urged Korean people to keep order and act in a fair and just way, to demonstrate a free spirit and at no time display hostile feeling, but to express fully the just will of the nation "to the last man and to the last minute." The flame of rebellion quickly spread to all parts of the country. Korean people shook their national flags and shouted "Taehan tongnip manse" [Long Live Korean Independence]. That was the extent of their action.

After the Samil Independence Movement, the Korean nationalist leaders realized the necessity of bringing the methods of resistance to a realistic level. In April 1919, therefore, representatives of Korea's thirteen provinces established the Korean Provisional Government (KPG) in exile in Shanghai, China, in order to concentrate and lead the nation's independence movements. The KPG considered it most urgent to form a military force to oppose the Japanese. In the Chientao region, Manchuria, a number of volun-

2 Translated from the first paragraph of the Samil Declaration of Korean Independence.
teers had been active since 1910 when Japan annexed Korea. The KPG continuously tried to unite these scattered troops. On September 17, 1940, the KPG barely succeeded in establishing the Kwangbok-kun [the Restoration Army] in Chungking, China, uniting most of the anti-Japanese guerrilla groups except several extreme leftist groups. Its force was some 5,000 men strong at its peak. These anti-Japanese resistance groups engaged in guerrilla activities, terrorism, and partisan warfare in Korea, Manchuria, and mainland China. A number of Koreans also joined the Nationalist Chinese Army or the Communist Chinese Army to fight against Japan.

In the meantime, Koreans also served in the pro-Japanese military in either voluntary or compulsory terms. In 1938, after the Japanese Army invaded mainland China, they adopted a voluntary system to mobilize Korean young men. From April 1944, however, the Japanese began to enforce compulsory military service on Koreans. During the war, over 300,000 Korean young men "volunteered" by force or were conscripted into the Japanese army. Hundreds of Koreans attained officer rank, including about one hundred graduates of the Japanese Military Academy. A number of Koreans

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4 Imperial Japan even drafted 143,000 Korean women as the so-called "Juosin-tai" [battlefield comfort girls]. See Han Paek-hungeon, Yója chōngsin-dae gū chinsang [The Women Juosin-tai, The Real State of It] (Seoul; Yesul munwhasa, 1982), preface.
also served in the Manchukuo Army, the puppet forces of Imperial Japan. Those officers who served at the Manchukuo Army usually graduated from the Manchukuo Military Institute and then engaged in the task of suppressing Korean and Chinese anti-Japanese guerrillas. The number of those who had Japanese military background were estimated at about 50,000 by early 1946. 

After the Liberation, with the unprecedented freedom overflowing, there emerged a number of Korean political parties and social organizations in South Korea. New parties, new groups mushroomed overnight. According to American official sources there were at least 61 political organizations by January 1946. In June, 1946, the total of registered national political parties was 107, and a year later there were known to be over 344 such organizations in South Korea.

By late 1945, there also appeared around thirty unofficial or private armies, created according to their members' military background or political, social, regional, and personal relationships. Soldiers and officers demobilized from the Japanese Army played a major role, but they also

5 Han, Yong-wŏn, Ch'ang-gun [The Establishment of the Army] (Seoul: Haknim ch'ulp'an-sa, 1982), p. 71.
6 SCAP, Summation, No. 4, p. 282.
7 USAF PAC, Summation, No. 9 (June 1946), p. 16.
8 Ibid., No. 21 (June 1947), p. 25.
split into several groups. The major groups were:

Hakpyŏng tongmaeng [The association of the Japanese Army student-soldiers], Kwangbok Ch'ŏng nyŏn-hoe [The Restoration Youth Committee], Chosŏn imsi kunsan wiwŏnhoe [The Korean Provisional Military Committee], Ch’iandaehoe [The Brigade for Public Peace], Chosŏn kukkun chunbidae [National Preparatory Army], Han’guk changkyodan kunsan chubi-hoe [The Korean Officer Corps Military Preparatory Committee].

The private armies claimed that they were playing a leading role in protecting public law and order and that they would devote themselves to the creation of the Korean national army in the future. It was true that they did play important roles in maintaining the peace and order before and even after the United States Army arrived. However, there were also some civil disruption such as clashes between rightist groups and leftist ones, the abuse of power over citizens, and the extortion of money. Even though the original motivation of creating private armies was patriotic, these disorderly actions would never be desire-


10 The New York Times wrote that “Korean sources estimated that thirty five Koreans have been killed by Japanese police since August 15, but not one Japanese has been killed by a Korean as far as is known.” New York Times, 12 September 1945. Even on the day of the American troops landing in Inch'on, September 8, Japanese police killed two Koreans who attended demonstrations to welcome the American troops. See “HUSAFIK,” Vol. I, ch. IV, p. 6; Masil sinbo, 12 September 1945.
ble for public peace or the establishment of the Korean army in the future.

In late October 1945, General Hodge directed Cho Pyŏng-ok, the Korean Director of the National Police, to disband all private armies. But Cho refused until the occupation authorities came up with a plan to incorporate them into a sanctioned military organization. As Cho stated:

Private armies are the reflex of the Korean people's long cherished wish having their own army.... When the USAMGIK resolves the problem of the military, then we will disband all of the private armies.\(^{11}\)

General Hodge apparently accepted Cho's argument. General Hodge himself came to believe that the most practical way to control the source of manpower of private armies was to divert their energies into a national channel, particularly into Korean national defense forces.\(^{12}\) Actually, private armies could provide a partially trained nucleus for the Korean defense forces, if and when such forces were authorized.\(^{13}\)

The occupation authorities, therefore, postponed the application of the Article III of Ordinance No. 28, issued on November 13, 1945, which prescribed the disbanding of all private armies. The occupation authorities actually began to apply the provisions from January 21, 1946, just

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\(^{13}\) SCAP, *Monthly Summary*, No. 2. p. 185.
after they created the Korean Constabulary. These private armies eventually provided soldiers for the Constabulary and students for the English Language School.

When the American Military Government established the Korean Constabulary in early 1946, those who served in the Japanese or Manchukuo Army became the main source of soldiers. In the process of establishing a Korean armed forces, the American Military Government favored the Japanese army veterans. Pragmatically the Japanese army veterans were the majority both in quantity and quality. Moreover the Korean officials in the Military Government, who were mostly former officials in the Japanese Government-General, apparently influenced recruitment. In fact, the domination of the Japanese army veterans in the Constabulary was part of common pattern in the MG's bureaucratic structure in which domination by former officials of the Japanese Government-General was predominant. Thus, the former anti-Japanese resistance veterans were isolated and remained as dissatisfied minorities during the American occupation periods. Although they came to join the officer corps, mostly after the establishment of the Republic of Korea Army in 1948 through the two special classes of the Officer Training School, the ex-guerrillas' status never changed since the Japanese army veterans' influence in the ROK Army was too predominant to overcome.

Since the potential manpower pool for a new Korean army officer corps had such diverse backgrounds—from former officers, noncommissioned officers (NCOs), and even enlisted men in the Japanese, Manchukuo, or Chinese armies to former anti-Japanese guerrilla officers and soldiers—it was essential to create an institute to train them to have some professional values and goals the new Korean army needed. At first, the occupation authorities established the English Language School (ELS) on December 5, 1945. Nominally it was a language school teaching English in order to produce Korean interpreters for the administration of the American Military Government, especially for military affairs. In fact, however, it was a military institute. Every student had to have previous military experience to enter the school, and the bulk of the students were formerly commissioned officers in the foreign armies. In school, they learned not only English but several military subjects and drills.

After the creation of the Korean Constabulary in January 1946, the occupation authorities considered establishing an institute to produce military officers exclusively. On May 1, 1946, the American Military Government established the Officer Training School (OTS) in the Korean Constabulary Training Center at T’aen’ung. 15 Until it was closed in 1950

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15 Koreans called the OTS for "Chosŏn kyŏngbi sagwan hak-kyo" [The Korean Constabulary Academy]. On September 5, 1948, after the foundation of the Republic of Korea, the
by the North Korean invasion, this officer candidate school-styled institute produced twelve classes. It was the only institute, with a very few exceptional cases of special commissions, to produce officers before an officer candidate school was organized in the Infantry School at Sihung in September 1949.  

Since the candidates who had diverse backgrounds were commissioned only through this institute, the OTS was a "melting pot." Through the educational program of this school, the graduates not only learned new military knowledge, skill, and leadership for their daily practice as officers, but also came to have firm loyalty to the liberated motherland. Of course, there were a lot of problems in their education. Struggles between the American military doctrines and Japanese or the Chinese military practices in the process of training were unavoidable. There were also constant complaints from candidates that the school and higher authorities treated "the unequal as equals." These complaints usually came from the candidates who had held higher ranks or who had received formal military education at foreign military institutes. Furthermore, there were communist infiltrators, particularly in the early classes.

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school was renamed the Korea Military Academy.

16 Sawyer, Military Advisors in Korea, pp. 85-86.
Although they had different military backgrounds and careers, and even though there were a number of problems, the graduates of the ELS and OTS altogether became the foundations of the Korean Constabulary and the subsequent ROK Army. It seemed as if a stone wall had been built with all sorts of stones which came from mountains, plains, or near rivers. But they had to be stuck together by the special cement of "anti-Communism" in order to be a bulwark against Communist expansion.

B. THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE SCHOOL

While they were waiting for the reply from Washington to their proposal to create a Korean national defense force, recommended in late November 1945, the occupation authorities proceeded one more step toward preparation if approval were granted. The initial problem was the language barrier between Americans and Koreans. On December 5, 1945, the occupation authorities established the English Language School at the place of the Methodist Theological Seminary in Naengch’ŏn-dong [The Cold Fountain Village], Seoul.¹⁷

The immediate function of the school was the training of interpreters, but it also aimed at training cadres for the future Korean army. An official source made it clear that "The purpose of the class is to develop interpreters to assist in the instruction of the Korean Armed Forces, when the time comes for beginning such instruction." 18

The chief of this enterprise was Lt. Col. A. W. Green of the Judge Advocate General's Department, and Major L. W. Reese assisted him. 19 They invited six major private armies to send candidates to the ELS. The candidates should be former officers or non-commissioned officers and, at the same time, should have diplomas from college or middle school. 20

Some Korean people became deeply involved in the establishment of this institute. The most influential person was Yi Êng-jun, who advised and aided the occupation authorities on military affairs. Yi had been a colonel in the Japanese army and became a prominent figure in the selection of candidates to the ELS. He later became an advisor to the Director of the Office of National Defense and eventually the first ROK Army chief of staff in 1948. Also influential in the selection of candidates for the

18 Press Releases, Office of The Military Governor, Item 2, 21 December 1945, RG 332, Box 27.

19 Ibid.

20 Ibid.; Sawyer, Military Advisors in Korea, p. 12.
school was Wŏn Yong-dŏk, a former lieutenant colonel in the Manchukuo Army. He became the vice-superintendent of the ELS and later a lieutenant general in the ROK Army. The third person, whose name was Cho Kae-ok, represented the Kwangbok Army and the Chinese Army. But his role was minor.

At first, the class was to be opened with sixty students who would come from three major groups by a quota system: twenty from the Japanese Army, twenty from the Manchukuo Army, and twenty from the Chinese Army and the Kwangbok Army. However, most of the Kwangbok Army soldiers, who were disappointed with the "pro-Japanese" policy of the occupation authorities, refused to participate in the school with officers from the Japanese and Manchukuo Army. They argued that the "traitors" could not be the cadres of the future army. Consequently the students came mainly from the Japanese and Manchukuo Army. To avoid factionalism between the major groups, however, the occupation authorities urged the group leaders to recommend younger members as soon as possible. Simultaneously the occupation authorities also searched for potential officers who did not belong to any private armies. For example, Yi Hyŏng-kŭn was invited to apply individually by American officers. He, Yi

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22 There were only two Chinese Army veterans who were recommended by Cho Kae-ok. See Yi Üng-jun, Autobiography, p. 235.
Üng-jun's son-in-law, became the first graduate of the ELS.

The entrance examination was held at Room 203 of the capital building, the office of the military branch of the Military Government. American and Korean examiners arranged an interview and a physical checkup, and ascertained the previous military career of each candidate.

The number of students was sixty in the beginning, but later the total enrollment rose to around two hundred.\textsuperscript{23} Students were divided into four classes of A, B, C, and D according to their English proficiency and the date of admission. While the class "A" instructor sometimes taught with original American magazines, the class "D" instructor had to begin from "one, two, three..." counting candies in his hand. The nickname of the class "D" was "kindergarten."\textsuperscript{24}

The major part of the curriculum was, of course, military English, but students also learned Korean history and practical basic training in military subjects such as organizations and formations, staff affairs, handling of small arms (except shooting), and military inspection and parade. Besides the majority of American instructors, there

\textsuperscript{23} Interestingly enough, there were 12 students from the Police Bureau. See Press Releases, Office of the Military Governor, Item 2, 21 December 1945, RG 332, Box 27.

\textsuperscript{24} In its early years the School of Application at Leavenworth acquired the same nickname because of the remedial nature of its curriculum. Timothy K. Nenninger, The Leavenworth Schools and the Old Army (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1978), p. 27.
were also several Korean instructors. They were Mr. Wun Yung Duk, Dr. Kwang Lyong Choon, and Dr. Im Yund Bin. And Mr. Kim Sang Yong, formerly Dean of Ewha Women’s University worked as a consultant. According to the result of the daily examinations in military English, the students in the lower classes could move into the higher classes.

The biggest problem of the school was the lack of a clearly defined purpose. Because there was no definite policy that after graduation the students would be military officers or civil officials in the military government, and because there was no definite date of graduation, a number of students worried about their future and left the school. Officially, the status of the students was not that of officer candidates, but classified as civilian employees of the Office of Director of National Defense. On the other hand, the larger part of the students believed and hoped that they would be officers of the future Korean army.

About January of 1946, however, it became clear that at least a Korean Constabulary had to be created for internal security. As the Military Government’s policy became clear,  

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25 Press Releases, Office of the Military Governor, Item 2, 21 December 1945, RG 332, Box 27.

26 Ibid.; Yuksa samsimnyŏn-sa, p. 64.

27 At the time of the invitation to the candidates, Korean examiners particularly and even a few American officers encouraged the candidates saying that they would be the "corner stone" of the future Korean Army. Interviews, Generals Yi Ung-jun (6 April 1976), Yi Hyŏng-kun (14 May 1977), Chŏng Il-gwŏn (22 June 1977), and other alumni.
the unstable atmosphere among the students diminished. The school began to produce graduates after early January, 1946. The graduation date of each student was different, according to his English proficiency, former career, and the date of admission. (The average training period was about one month.) Most of the graduates were commissioned as second lieutenants, but there were several exceptional cases. 28

On February 27, 1946, the ELS moved to T’aenüng, the site of the Korean Constabulary Training Center, and continued to educate students until April 30, 1946, when it was closed. (From its opening on December 5, 1945, to April 30, 1946, the ELS produced about 140-150 graduates: 110 were commissioned as military officers, and 30-40 were assigned as Military Government bureaucrats. Of 110 commissioned graduates, 12 came from the Japanese Military Academy, 72 from Hakpyóng [The Japanese Army student-soldier], 6 from Chiwónpyóng [The Japanese Army volunteer-soldier], 18 from the Manchukuo Army, and only 2 from the Nationalist Chinese Army. 29 In other words, 108 men out of 110 graduates had the Japanese military background.) Several students

28 particularly during the last period of the school, there were several cases of special commissions based on candidates’ former careers and ranks. For instance, Yi Ŭng-jun, even though he did not attend the English Language School as a student, was considered a graduate of the school and commissioned as a full colonel. Yuksa samsimnyôn-sa, p. 65.

29 Ibid.
who were not commissioned until April 30, transferred into the First Class of the Officer Training School, opened on May 1, 1946.

It is not clear whether the school administrators and instructors emphasized an anti-Communist value system during the education. However, there were already strong sentiments of anti-Communism among the students. For example, during the anti-trusteeship embroilment in early 1946, anti-trusteeship advocates (Rightists) expelled several pro-trusteeship advocates (Leftists) from the school.\textsuperscript{30} The fact that over 98 percent of the graduates did have the Japanese military background also suggests the strong anti-Communist bias among them.

The graduates of the English Language School devoted themselves to the creation of the Constabulary, and eventually came to dominate the top levels of the ROK Army after 1948. Statistics reveal their remarkable domination in the ROK Army: 78 out of 110 graduates became generals, including 8 four-star generals and 26 three-star generals. Surprisingly enough, thirteen became the Chief of Staff of the Army.\textsuperscript{31}

\textsuperscript{30} Han, Ch’ang-gun, p. 77; interviews with Generals Yi Hyŏng-kŭn (14 May 1977), Chŏng Il-kwŏn (22 June 1977).

\textsuperscript{31} Statistics are from Yuksa samsimnyŏn-sa, pp. 64-65; and Han, Ch’ang-gun, pp. 76-87.
CHAPTER V
THE OFFICER TRAINING SCHOOL: THE ONE AND ONLY GATE

After the establishment of the Korean Constabulary on January 14, 1946, the creation of an institute for officers training became a matter of urgent necessity. Although it produced the first group of officers, the English Language School was a language training school rather than a military institute. Thus, the American Military Government decided to redesignate the ELS as a pure military school. On May 1, 1946, the day after the ELS closed, the Military Government established the Officer Training School (OTS) in the Korean Constabulary Training Center at T'aenüng. However, from the first, Koreans called the OTS "Chosön kyōng-bi sagwan hakkyo" [The Korean Constabulary Academy].

The OTS produced over 1,200 constabulary officers through its six classes until September 5, 1948, when the name of the school changed officially from the OTS to the

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1 At T’aenüng area, there was a former Japanese Army training center for the Korean "volunteers." The American Military Government rehabilitated the facilities to house a Constabulary garrison, where they began to organize the First Regiment of the Constabulary on 15 January 1946. Currently, the Korea Military Academy occupies this site, the northeast part of Seoul. See Sawyer, military Advisors in Korea, pp. 14-15.
Korea Military Academy. During that period, in spite of ceaseless efforts to fulfill its academic mission, the OTS suffered from the lack of competent instructors, proper facilities, and firm programs. Furthermore, because of the urgent demand for officers in the expanding Constabulary the OTS had to produce more officers more quickly. Thus the OTS had to adopt a short-term schooling system of 7 weeks long at the shortest and 6 months long at the longest.

Nevertheless, there were two fortunate things: Most of the officer candidates in the early period had a certain amount of previous military experience except those who were in the fifth class; and most of them were earnest and enthusiastic about being the nucleus of the armed forces for the liberated motherland. Their military experience and enthusiasm compensated greatly for the weaknesses of the short-term programs.

In the meantime, the Korea Military Academy curriculum during the period of 1948-1950 was also largely the same as the OTS except that the school was renamed. The KMA continued education for another six classes—the Seventh, the Special Seventh, the Eighth, the Special Eighth, the Ninth and the Tenth—with a very similar program as the OTS until it was closed by the North Korean invasion in June 1950. There was also nothing new in the length of the educational period except the last class. Three regular classes of the
Seventh, Eighth, and Ninth took a standard 6-month course; two special classes had an irregular training term of several weeks; and the Tenth class had a new one-year program. Before the Korean War, the KMA remained as an "officer candidate school" like the OTS. The KMA produced over 3,400 officers before the war began. The development of personnel administration, the backgrounds of the officer candidates, organizations, and curricula of each class were as follows.²

The First Class

The First Class opened on May 1, 1946, with 88 students consisting of those who were the remnants of the English Language School, and NCOs and enlisted men who were recommended by each regiment of the Constabulary. All of them had previous military experience in the foreign armies. They received small arms training with Japanese rifles such as Models 99 or 38, and basic drills of formation and organization with American military doctrine taught by American officers. However, small-unit tactics taught by Korean officers were based on Japanese doctrine. They used old Japanese Army uniforms, and their barracks life was

² In 1966, the Korean Army Headquarters made a decision on the adjustment and appellation of the classes of the Korea Military Academy. Through this decision the OTS classes could have the linkage officially with the Academy. The names of classes used in this study followed this appellation.
managed by strict discipline based also on the Japanese Army style. During seven weeks of education, only two leave days were allowed.

On June 15, 1946, forty graduates were commissioned as second lieutenants for over forty students transferred to the Coast Guard just after their entrance into the OTS. The first Class graduates became the core members of the Constabulary with the graduates of the ELS in its early stages of expansion and development. They reached to the regimental commander class when the Korean War broke out, and eventually became a part of top command in the Korean Army.

The Second Class

The candidates of the Second Class entered the school on September 3, 1946, one hundred days after the First Class graduated. During this period, the OTS managed a remedial training course from July 15 to August 26 for the junior officers who graduated from the ELS.

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3 The Korean Constabulary Headquarters, Appointment Order, No. 27, 17 June 1946. Meanwhile, an American source indicated that the date of graduation was June 17. According to this source, five of the graduates received silver awards for superior achievements. USAFPAC, Summation, No. 9 (June 1946), p. 22; Press Relesses, USAMGIK, Dept. of Public Information, 19 June 1946, Item 9, RG 332, Box 23.
The selection procedures for the Second Class were two-track: (1) Interviews only for the former officers and NCOs from the foreign armies and enlisted men from the Constabulary; and (2) written examinations and interviews for those who came from civilian life.\footnote{USAPPAC, \textit{Summation}, No. 9, p. 21.} There were 35 former officers and about 60 NCOs and enlisted men among 263 candidates of the Second Class.\footnote{One hundred and fifty five men of 400 applicants passed the entrance examinations held September 17-19. \textit{Ibid.}, No. 12 (September 1946), p. 21. This number might be the civilian entrants of the Second Class. See also Press Releases, USAMGIK, 24 September 1946, Item 3, RG 332, Box 23.} The average age of the entrants was around 23, but the age brackets were widely distributed from 20 to 32.

The candidates were divided into two companies and were trained mainly by Korean company commanders and their assistant instructors. Korean instructors taught the candidates with Japanese rifles, Japanese small-unit tactics, and Japanese style marching and quartering. But several basic drills such as formations, troop inspection and parade, and the bayonet drill were taught by American officers.

There were also a lot of problems caused mainly by the lack of proper educational environments. Two of the most troublesome problems, as in most of the other classes, were the clothing and meal services. There was no regulated uni-
form system. Each candidate was furnished with discarded Japanese Army uniforms, but there were no preparations for winter. The candidates also suffered from hunger because of a nation-wide food crisis in late 1946. Sometimes a few sweet potatoes substituted for a daily meal. Another critical problem was that there were communist infiltrators among the candidates and even among the instructors.

On December 14, 1946, after eighty days training, 196 candidates were commissioned as second lieutenants. The Second Class graduates called themselves the "worker bees" in the development of the Constabulary and the subsequent Korean Army. Actually they occupied most of the divisional staff or battalion command positions when the Korean War broke out. Later they came to dominate the senior positions in the Army, particularly after the Military Revolution in 1961. They produced 79 generals including 6 four-star generals. Furthermore, they exercised decisive influence over Korean politics in the 1960s and 1970s.

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6 The Korean Constabulary Headquarters, Appointment Order, No. 74, 14 December 1946. There were only 193 names on the list of the above appointment order, but the author ascertained 196 names in the alumni list of the Second Class and confirmed it through interviews. Meanwhile, an American record indicated that there were 192 graduates. See USAFPAC, Summation, No. 15 (December 1946), p. 23.

7 In the history of the Korean Army, this is the largest number of generals produced by a class.

8 President Park Chung Hee and Kim Chae-gyu (assassin of President Park in 1979) were also members of the Second Class.
The Third and Fourth Classes

The Third Class began training on January 13, 1947, with 339 candidates who came mainly from the NCOs and enlisted men of the Constabulary. They were selected from about 500 soldiers recommended by each regiment of the Constabulary, through written examinations and interviews. A number of entrants also had a certain amount of previous military experience in the foreign armies as enlisted men.

Its training period was a three-month course, and the curriculum was generally the same for the Second Class. One thing special was that for the first time American weapons such as the M1 rifle, M-2 carbine, and Browning light machine gun were introduced by American advisors, one week before graduation. The strict barracks life, the lack of clothing and food supply, and the harassment by the communist infiltrators went on as before for the Third Class. On April 19, 1947, 280 graduates of the Third Class were commissioned as second lieutenants.

In the meantime, the Fourth Class entered the school on May 16, 1947. Most of the 120 entrants were former NCOs

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9 USAFPAC, Summation, No. 16 (January 1947), p. 33.


11 Yuksa samsimnyŏn-sa, p. 86. On the other hand, an American source recorded that 102 students entered the school
or enlisted men of the Constabulary. Their training period was nearly four months, but the curriculum was based on the three-month program which was set for the Third Class. On September 10, 1947, 107 graduates were commissioned as second lieutenants.12

The graduates of the Third and Fourth Class got into the captain or major ranks when the Korean War broke out. It was true that they were more or less in the shade of the Second Class graduates in their military service, although they performed a similar role in the expanding and developing period of the Constabulary.

The Fifth Class

The Fifth Class was the first selected by competitive examinations opened to civilians. According to a public advertisement for subscription, applicants had to possess qualifications equal to or higher than those of high school graduates, and be a male aged between 21 and 25.13 The entrance examinations consisted of interviews, a physical checkup, and written examinations in Korean history, Korean language, English, mathematics, and a composition on a given

on June 6. USAPPAC, Summation, No. 21 (June 1947), p. 34.

12 The Korean Constabulary Headquarters, Appointment Order, No. 102, 10 September 1947.

13 Tong’a ilbo, 1 May 1947.
en subject.

About 400 selected entrants were relatively equal in their age and educational backgrounds in comparison with previous classes. Since they had no former military experience, they received recruit training for three months at each regiment of the Constabulary just after the entrance on October 4, 1947. After that, they began to receive a three-month officer candidate training at the OTS. Therefore the total period of training for the Fifth Class was six months. This six-month program eventually became a standard model for the candidates who had civilian origins only and applied to the Seventh, Eighth, and Ninth Classes.

Beyond the military subjects such as small arms handling and shooting including M1, carbine, light machine gun, and 60 MM mortar, bayonet drill, small-unit tactics, and terrain exercises, the Fifth Class also received academic instruction in Korean language, English, Korean history, military law, and geography. Military training was managed by company and platoon commanders of the candidate corps, which consisted of two companies and four platoons each.

14 The candidates were divided into three groups for the recruit training: 160 men at the First Regiment in T'aenung, 120 at the Third Regiment in Iri, North Cholla province, and 120 at the Fifth Regiment in Pusan. Yuksa samsimnyôn-sa, p. 89.

15 The commander of the first company was Captain Park Chung Hee (later President of the ROK, 1963-1979).
The clothing supplies for the Fifth Class were somewhat improved, and the candidates began to be furnished with the surplus American military uniforms instead of the Japanese stocks. But the meal service was as poor as ever.

One fortunate thing was that communist infiltration into the Fifth Class was prohibited by the candidates themselves. Since nearly two-thirds of the Fifth Class candidates were refugees who had escaped from North Korea to avoid communist oppression, there was no room for communists to organize any factions in the class. From this time on, there was no communist infiltration of the OTS.

On April 6, 1948, 380 graduates were commissioned as second lieutenants.\(^{16}\)

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**The Sixth Class**

Once again, the candidates of the Sixth Class were selected from NCOs and enlisted men of the Constabulary. Two hundred and seventy-seven candidates entered the school on May 5, 1948, and were organized into two companies under the candidate corps. The candidate corps, which managed all military training and barracks life of the candidates, was the foundation of the curriculum as much as ever.

\(^{16}\) T‘ongwi-bu, the South Korean Interim Government, *Appointment Order*, No. 35, 1 April 1948.
Since the candidates of the Sixth Class came from active duty soldiers, the period and the contents of the education for them were based on the three-month program. It was largely the same with the second half of the Fifth Class. Among all training subjects, the most impressive one was the marching and quartering training practiced for a week. The candidates moved from the school to the Seoul Station by truck, from the Seoul Station to the Suwon area (about thirty miles south of Seoul) by train, and from Suwon to the school via Namhansanseong (The Namhan Mountain Fortress Wall from the time of the Yi Dynasty) by foot. This was a practical exercise, integrating all the training subjects they received including troop marching, quartering, terrain exercises, small-unit attack and defense, and supply for food and munitions. There was also the marching and quartering training in the previous classes, but this time it was more ambitious and was done on the largest scale ever. Another peculiarity of the Sixth Class was that they received home-made uniforms for the first time. Even though the quality was not as good as American uniforms, the candidates were proud of them.

On July 28, 1948, 235 graduates were commissioned as second lieutenants. 17 This was the last class which graduated from the school under the name of "Choson kyongbi sag-

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wan hakkyo" (that is OTS).

The Seventh Class

At first, the Seventh Class was to be selected only from among civilians. According to the original plan, the Seventh Class was scheduled to muster at the same time with the Sixth Class, and to receive a three-month recruit training while the Sixth Class, which came from active duty soldiers, received the officer candidate education at the OTS. The seventh Class would enter the OTS after the Sixth Class graduated. This schedule would allow no time lag in the production of both classes.

The characteristics of the Seventh Class were very similar to those of the Fifth Class in many respects. First, they came from civilians through a competitive examination consisting of written tests in Korean language, English, Korean history, mathematics, and a composition, a physical checkup, and interviews. Second, their educational period was a six-month course, consisting of the recruit training for the first half and the officer candidate education for the second half. Third, their ages and educational backgrounds were similar. Fourth, in both classes there were a number of anti-Communist youths who escaped from North Korea. On May 15, 1948, 279 selected candidates began to
receive recruit training.¹⁸

During the recruit training, however, the defense planners of the T'ongwi-bu and the Constabulary stepped forward to increase the number of candidates of the Seventh Class, to make preparations for the expansion and development of the Korean Army in the near future. They selected about 350 additional candidates from NCOs and enlisted men from each regiment.¹⁹ These candidates entered the OTS on August 9, 1948, together with the candidates initially selected.²⁰ Consequently, the component ratio of civilians to active duty soldiers in the Seventh Class entrants was 45:55 percent.

The curriculum was largely the same as that of the Fifth and the Sixth Classes but the one thing different was that the new class received training for crew-served weapons such as the Browning heavy machine gun, 60 and 81 MM mortar, and 57 MM recoilless rifle, more intensively than ever before. They practiced a marching and quartering exercise at the Changch'ung Park in the heart of Seoul for three days. It seemed to be a "show of force" to set at ease citizens' minds which might be disturbed by the Yŏsu and Sunch'ŏn Rebellions instigated by the Communist soldiers.

¹⁸ Ibid., No. 62, 10 May 1948.
¹⁹ Ibid., No. 111, 4 August 1948; No. 182, Clause 6, 23 August 1948 (retroactivated to August 9).
²⁰ Yuksa samsimnyŏn-sa, p. 96.
The Seventh Class again received surplus American military uniforms. Amusingly, a number of candidates received iron helmets without fiber helmet liners in them since the number of candidates was increased beyond plans, so that they used to bind up their heads with towels when they had to put on the iron helmet. A candidate reminisced that the "bare iron helmet" was so hot that "his head was going to be cooked" under the blazing sunshine of August, and that it bothered him particularly while running.  

On September 5, 1948, in the midst of their training, the school was renamed from Choson kyongbi sagwan hakkyo (The Korean Constabulary Academy; that is OTS) to Taehan-min’guk Ykkun sagwan hakkyo (The Korea Military Academy).  Thus 561 graduates were commissioned as second lieutenants of the ROK Army on November 11, 1948.  

**The Special Seventh Class**

As mentioned above, the defense planners of the T’ongwi-bu increased the Seventh Class candidates to meet the need for officers in the future. Simultaneously, they set new policies to attract the veterans of the foreign armies and the Kwangbok Army, who were still interested in the army.

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21 Interview, General Kim Hong gyu (14 July 1976).
22 *Yuksa samjimnyon-sa*, pp. 68, 97, 559.
On August 17, 1948, 219 candidates entered the OTS for the last time under the old name of the school. Nearly all of the candidates came from former officers and NCOs in the Japanese, Manchukuo, and Chinese armies. The disparity in the previous careers and ages was extreme after the Second Class. In the extreme case, there was a 15-year gap between the youngest and the oldest. The prime object of the training was to re-educate the candidates with American military doctrines and weapon systems.

After the eight-week intense training, 190 graduates were commissioned as second lieutenants on October 12, 1948. This was the first graduation of the school under the official name of the Korea Military Academy, and President Syngman Rhee attended the ceremony for the first time. Although all the graduates were commissioned as second lieutenants, there were a lot of special promotions just after the graduation in consideration of the soldiers' former ranks and careers. This was one of the two special classes in the history of the Korea Military Academy, which reflected the unique background of the emergence of the

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24 The Korean Constabulary Headquarters, appointment Order, No. 120, 20 August 1948. There were 27 additional entrants after August 17, the official entrance day. See also Appointment Orders, No. 122, Clause 10 (August 23), No. 127, Clause 2 (August 17), No. 129, Clause 10 (August 31), No. 131, Clause 1 (September 3), No. 140, Clause 2 (September 21), and No. 142, Clause 1 (September 23).

Korean Army officer corps. The nucleus of the Army officer corps in its early stage came from those who had previous military experiences in the foreign armies.

The Eighth Class

The Eighth Class entered the school on December 7, 1948. At that time the domestic political and social situations of Korea were unstable since there were strong leftist insurrections such as the Cheju Island Riot in the spring and the Yŏsu-sunch’ŏn Rebellion in the fall of that year. Moreover, there were a series of clashes along the 38th parallel between the North and the South. These insurrections and clashes made the newly-born Korean government see the importance of national defense so that the defense planners pushed forward an expansion plan for an Army. First of all, the decision makers decided to increase sharply the number of the Eighth Class officer candidates.\(^{26}\) Originally 948 candidates were selected from civilians through a competitive examination.\(^{27}\) However, there were over one hundred additional entrants at about

\(^{26}\) Interview, General Chŏng Il-gwŏn (22 June 1977). General Chŏng was the committee chairman as a colonel for the Eighth Class entrance examinations.

\(^{27}\) There was a list of 948 successful applicants on a public notice in Tong’ā ilbo (East Asia Daily) of 4 November 1948. Tens of names, however, overlapped in that notice. See Tong’ā ilbo (East Asia Daily), 4 November 1948.
the entrance date of December 7, 1948.  

Meanwhile, Army Headquarters selected more candidates for the "Ninth Class" from the enlisted men recommended by each brigade during February, 1949. Two hundred and twenty eight men entered the school on March 19 as the "Ninth Class" candidates. But they eventually graduated with the original Eighth Class as a part of the Eighth Class. Of course, later the real Ninth Class was recruited again. Consequently there were two courses in the Eighth Class in terms of the educational period--a six-month course for civilians and a three-month course for active duty soldiers.

Since there were so many entrants, the officer candidate corps was organized into two battalions, and the second battalion camped at the newly established branch campus in Kongdôk-ni, about two miles northwest from the main campus. The contents of the curriculum for the Eighth Class were improved a little in comparison with the Fifth or Sev-

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28 The author could not find any official sources in Korea or the United States, which revealed the correct number of the Eighth Class. The author estimates it as 1,100 or 1,150 from newspapers and interviews with those who are supposed to be knowledgeable about this matter, such as the committee members of the entrance examinations, the executives of the school in those days, and the Eighth Class alumni, during Summer 1976-Summer 1977.

29 GHQ, The ROK Army, Appointment Order, No. 47 (10 March 1949), and No. 52 (March 17).

30 Later the Engineering College of the Seoul National University came to be located at that site.
enth Class. For example, it included company-level tactics and a more intensive course of physical subjects. As a special change Brigadier General Kim Hong-il,\textsuperscript{31} the seventh superintendent of the school, emphasized the subjecthood of national spirit vigorously and tried to break from the Japanese military conventions. He made a motto of "Ch’ung’guk, Aemin" (Be loyal to the country, and esteem the people) as a goal of education, and preached it through his preceptive speeches. He believed firmly that "spirit" took precedence over "skill" as a virtue of a Korean officer at that time.

On May 23, 1949, 1,264 graduates were commissioned as second lieutenants.\textsuperscript{32} The Eighth Class graduates were first lieutenants when the Korean War broke out, and nearly one third of them died or were missing in action during the war. Later they played a major role in the coup d’état of 1961.

\textbf{The Special Eighth Class}

\textsuperscript{31} General Kim Hong-il was one of the famous and respected patriots as a leader of the Kwangbok Army. Later he led Sinmin-dang [The New Democratic Party], the opposition party, for a while during the Park Administration. Interviews, Generals Kim Hong-il and Chang Ho-gang (3 May 1977).

This class was the last open to veterans of the foreign armies and the Kwangbok Army who wanted to join the officer corps. Most of the Kwangbok soldiers and other patriotic anti-Japanese guerrilla members still remained outside of the army since they were dissatisfied with the American Military Government's policy favoring ex-collaborators and former Japanese military officers. Also there were several senior persons who had served in the Japanese Army who then exercised self-restraint in their behavior or were alienated by the Military Government.

General Yi Pŏm-sŏk, the first Prime Minister and Minister of National Defense of the Republic of Korea, argued that the new Korean Army had to inherit the patriotism of the Kwangbok Army, but had also to utilize the expertise and experiences attained in the Japanese Army. This meant that the new Korean Army would include the former Kwangbok soldiers and Japanese army veterans who were still not in the Army. General Yi especially tried to persuade the Kwangbok soldiers to join the Army. Thus they came in to attend the Special Eighth Class. In this class, four different groups trained separately, and two subgroups appeared in the fourth group.

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33 General Yi Pŏm-sŏk was one of the best-known Korean anti-Japanese fighters as a leader of the Kwangbok Army. He graduated from the Yunnan Military Academy Cavalry School, China, in 1919. On his career and thought, see Yi Pŏm-sŏk, Han'guk ŭi punno [Korea's Indignation] (Seoul: Kwangch'ang-gak, 1945).
The First Group

This group, which entered the school on December 7, 1948, was composed of eleven senior persons who had served in the Japanese or Chinese Army as senior officers. Two-thirds of them were already around fifty years old. Therefore they did not receive actual training, but only "stayed to watch" for three weeks. On January 1, 1949, seven were commissioned as full colonels, one as lieutenant colonel, one as major, and two as captains.34 They included several famous persons whose names were widely known before or after their commissioning like Yu Sŏng-yŏl, Kim Sŏk-wŏn, Yi Chun-sik, and An Ch'un-saeng.35

The Second Group

34 GHQ, The ROK Army, Appointment Order, No. 1, Clause 1 (4 January 1949), No. 2, Clause 1 (January 6), No. 16, Clause 1 (January 31).

35 Yu Sŏng-yŏl is the father of then colonel Yu Chae-hŭng who was an English Language School graduate and was appointed vice-superintendent of the KMA on January 15, 1949. Kim Sŏk-wŏn was a colonel in the Japanese Army, and was portrayed as a hero for his brilliant war record in the China theater. Yi chun-sik became the eighth superintendent of the KMA as a brigadier general on 10 June 1949, just 5 months after his commission as a colonel. And An Ch'un-saeng, a graduate from Whampoa Military Academy in China and a nephew of Martyr An Chung-gûn who killed Ito Hirobumi, later became the ninth superintendent of the KMA (the first for a full four-year course academy) in October 1951.
This group also entered the school on December 7. The larger part of the 160 entrants were former Kwangbok soldiers. Among them were a number of older persons around 40-50 years of age. These old Kwangbok soldiers applied for admission to the KMA to accomplish their long-cherished desire; they really had been anxious to wear the military uniforms of their liberated country for the whole period of their resistance. They endured all hardships during the five-week training period in the same manner as their younger classmates.

One hundred and forty-five men graduated on January 14, 1949. While all of them were commissioned as second lieutenants at first, there followed many cases of special promotion in accordance with one's former career and rank. An interesting development was that the graduates from this group later dominated the intelligence branches of the Army.

The Third Group

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36 As a special case, candidate Kim Ryŏn was 61 years old at that time. One of his sons entered the KMA on the same day with him as a candidate of the regular Eighth Class. Yuksa samsimnyŏn-sa. P. 107.

37 Interview, General Chang Ho-gang (3 May 1977).

38 GHQ, The ROK Army, Appointment Order, No. 9, Clause 1, 14 January 1949.
Around 190 candidates of this group, who entered the school on the same day with the first two groups, came mainly from former NCOs in the foreign armies and members of the prominent rightist social or student organizations who did not have previous military experiences. Therefore their training period of 12 weeks was the longest one in the Special Eighth Class. The curriculum for this group followed largely along the basic three-month course which was applied to the Sixth or other classes composed of active duty soldiers. On March 2, 1949, 181 graduates were commissioned as second lieutenants.³⁹

the Fourth Group

Dissimilar from the other groups, this group entered the school on February 21, 1949.⁴⁰ Since this was the very last opportunity to admit the special candidates, however, Army Headquarters allowed several cases of additional entrance.⁴¹ As a result the total number of entrants reached around 250 men. There was much variation in the former careers and ages of the candidates. They included

³⁹ Ministry of National Defense, ROK, Appointment Order, No. 18, Clause 1, 2 March 1949. There were also several cases of special promotion for certain graduates of this group, but not notable.

⁴⁰ Original entrants were 179 men. GHQ, The ROK Army, Appointment Order, No. 29, 15 February 1949.

⁴¹ Ibid., No. 36 (24 February 1949), No. 42, Clause 3 (March 4), and No. 44, Clause 1 (March 7).
Kwangbok soldiers or fighters from other anti-Japanese resistance organizations, former officers and enlisted men in the foreign armies, and even civilians who had no previous military experience. Ages of the candidates were widely distributed from the twenties to age sixty. There were several novel cases of brothers, father and son, and father-in-law and son-in-law who became classmates together. They were organized into an independent company under the command of Major Chŏng Nae-hyŏk.

This group was again divided into two subgroups upon their graduation dates. One hundred and forty-eight older candidates came from the Kwangbok Army or foreign armies graduated on March 29, 1949, after five weeks they entered the school. And ninety-nine younger candidates who had little military experience previously graduated on April

\[42\] O In-taek and his brother O Ye-taek, Kim Chong-kŏn and his son, and Yi Dae-yŏng (63 years old at that time) and his son-in-law were those examples. Interviews, General Chang Ho-gang and other alumni (3 May 1977); see also Yuksa samsimnyŏn-sa, p. 110.

\[43\] Chŏng Nae-hyŏk, a graduate of the Japanese Military Academy, originally graduated from the English Language School. But he resigned from the Constabulary because of a conflict of opinions with an American advisor, and entered the Korean National Police. He was recommissioned, however, as a Special Seventh Class graduate. Later he became Minister of National Defense in the early seventies, and the Chairman of the National Assembly in the eighties. Interview, General Chŏng Nae-hyŏk (7 August 1976).

\[44\] Ministry of National Defense, ROK, Appointment Order, No. 23, Clause 1, 28 March 1949.
27, 1949, nine weeks after their entrance.\textsuperscript{45} All of them were commissioned as second lieutenants at first, but several graduates became captains or majors in a few months.

**The Ninth Class**

The entrance examinations for the Ninth Class had been conducted in two stages. The first examination consisted of a physical checkup and written tests in Korean language, Korean history, English, mathematics, physics, chemistry, and composition, and was conducted by regional selection committees in each Brigade during the period June 6-9, 1949; the second examination consisted of a character test and interview and was held at Army Headquarters in the Academy during the period June 18-20, 1949. But only those who passed the first examination could take the second examination.\textsuperscript{46} Applicants came largely from civilian life, but a quarter of the final entrants were former enlisted men of the Army. On July 15, 1949, 372 candidates for the Ninth Class and 107 candidates for the finance branch entered the school.\textsuperscript{47} And on July 20, 138 additional candidates who were former active duty soldiers of the Army entered.

\textsuperscript{45} Ibid., No. 30, 26 April 1949.

\textsuperscript{46} "A Public Notice for Subscription," Tong’\textquotesingle a ilbo, 7 May 1949.

\textsuperscript{47} GHQ, The ROK Army, Appointment Order, No. 148, Clauses 1, 2, and 5, 13 July 1949.
joined the Ninth Class.\textsuperscript{48}

The regular candidates formed three companies of the First, Second, and Third under the candidate corps and quartered at the main campus, while the finance branch candidates formed the Fifth company and camped at the Kongdŏkni branch campus. Their curriculum was based on the six-month standard course; the first half was the recruit training, and the second half went along the typical three-month course for the officer candidates. During the second half, the finance branch candidates received identical training according to the Japanese system.\textsuperscript{49}

On January 14, 1950, 580 graduates were commissioned as second lieutenants.\textsuperscript{50} About thirty graduates transferred to the newly established Korean Marine Corps just after their graduation.\textsuperscript{51} During the Korean War, the dead and missing among the Ninth Class graduates reached nearly 200 men since they were the front line leaders.

\textsuperscript{48} Ibid., No. 157, Clauses 11 and 12, 23 July 1949.

\textsuperscript{49} Although the Finance School of the ROK Army opened on 19 October 1949, it began to educate the First Finance Cadet Class selected at the same time with the Tenth Class of the KMA. Sawyer, \textit{Military Advisors in Korea}, pp. 80-81. On the First Finance Cadet Class, see GHQ, The ROK Army, \textit{Appointment Order}, No. 143, Clause 4, 13 July 1949; \textit{Yuksa samsimnyŏn-sa}, p. 120.

\textsuperscript{50} \textit{Tong'a ilbo}, 14 January 1949, \textit{Chosŏn ilbo}, 16 January 1949.

\textsuperscript{51} \textit{Yuksa samsimnyŏn-sa}, p. 116; Interview, General Kim Tong-gun (21 July 1976). General Kim was a graduate of the Ninth Class, and Dean of Academic Board of the KMA, 1969-1974.
The Tenth Class

This was the last class officially graduated from the KMA under the old program. i.e., before it reopened in 1951 as a full four-year course academy. Before 1956, when Army Headquarters made a decision on the adjustment and appellation of the classes, a popular name of this class was "Saengdo che ilki" [The First Cadet Class] because they were recruited as "Sagwan saengdo" [Cadet] for the first time, instead of "Sagwan hubosaeng" [officer candidate] as in former classes.

In the early stage of the Constabulary and the subsequent Army, the short term education like a OCS style training was inevitable partly because of an urgent need for officers in the field and partly because of the lack of a proper educational environment. It was true that the short term education could go a long way in its own method since most candidates at that time had some sort of previous military experience. However, it was also true that the short-term education was never sufficient to make a crack officer corps. Therefore the Korean defense planners began to map out a four-year course of education for the military academy just after the inauguration of the Korean Army. This intention received an affirmative response from the KMAG.
However, there were not yet proper facilities or enough Korean instructors qualified in military or academy subjects to institute a four-year program. Furthermore, there was still an urgent need for junior officers in the field, a need nobody except the KMA could supply. Therefore Army Headquarters chose a two-year program and made a public notice of recruiting for the "First Cadet Class" of a "two-year course" at the same time with the Ninth Class, the last case of a six-month course.\(^{52}\) Simultaneously, Army Headquarters decided to pause for two months after the graduation of the Eighth Class on May 23, 1949, in order to prepare to receive the cadet class. During this period, the Korean Army Headquarters selected several officers who possessed a good knowledge of English and trained them as instructors in close cooperation with the KMA.\(^{53}\)

On July 15, 1949, 338 men entered the school.\(^{54}\) They were between 19 and 25 years of age and possessed attainments equal to or higher than those of high school graduates. They had also passed the entrance examinations including a physical checkup, in several academic subjects, as well as a character test, and an interview.

\(^{52}\) *Tong’a ilbo*, 7 May 1949.

\(^{53}\) Sawyer, *Military Advisors in Korea*, pp. 81-82; *Yuksa samsimnyon-sa*, p. 117.

\(^{54}\) GHQ, The ROK Army, *Appointment Order*, No. 148, Clause 3 (13 July 1949), No. 157, Clauses 9 and 10 (July 23), and No. 171, Clause 22 (August 5). This class also included over 50 former enlisted men from the Army.
At the time of their entrance, however, the educational term for the First Cadet Class became a one-year course. First, there was still the lack of facilities and instructors. A second stumbling block in recruiting officers, an OCS program which was planned for the Infantry School at Sihŭng, was overcome by postponement. Nevertheless, the curriculum was varied and systematic compared with former classes. In the morning, cadets generally received academic instruction in Korean language, Korean history, English, mathematics, economics, and psychology, taught by invited lecturers from the Seoul National University. In the afternoon, military drills and physical training were conducted by military instructors. [For the first time, all of the military subjects were based on American military doctrine and weapons. The Korean Army eliminated, at least externally, all of the vestiges of Japanese military conventions from its military training and education.] During this period, for the first time, the KMA came to have the school motto as "Ch’ung, Yong" [Loyalty, Courage].

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55 Yuksa samsimnyŏn-sa, p. 118; Sawyer, Military Advisors in Korea, p. 82; Interviews, General Kim Hong-il (3 May 1977), Colonel Nam Sang-sŏn (19 July 1977). Colonel Nam was the President of the Tenth Class Cadet Association during the cadet period.

56 Yuksa samsimnyŏn-sa, p. 118; Sawyer, ibid., pp. 85-86.

57 Yuksa samsimnyŏn-sa, pp. 71-72, 120. It changed later in 1951, with the reopening of the school as a four-year program academy; "Chi [智], In [仁], Yong [勇]" [Wisdom, Virtue, Courage] became the motto.
Two hundred and sixty-three cadets of the Tenth Class were to be graduated on July 14, 1950. But the Korean War broke out on June 25, and they were immediately put in the front line at P’och’on area with the Second Cadet Class which entered the school just 25 days earlier. At the battles of P’och’ón, T’aenüng, and Suwŏn, the casualties of the Tenth Class were 65 dead, 20 wounded, and 44 missing. They fell as mere riflemen, not as leaders because of a nearsighted directive from Army Headquarters that ordered the school to use “raftering materials” as “firewood.” Korean Army high command should have saved the cadets for the future operations, assigning “a right man in the right place.”

Only 134 cadets of the Tenth Class could attend the graduation ceremony held in Taejŏn on July 10. But the government presented the writs of appointment for commission to all of the 263 cadets including the dead and missing. This was the last class which graduated from the KMA under the short-term program.

58 P’och’ón, about 25 miles northeast of Seoul, was one of the two areas with Tongduch’ŏn area that the North Korean Army directed their main attacks. On the Battle of Pu’ch’ŏn (a part of P’och’ón) in which the Cadet Corps engaged, see Yuksa samsimnyŏn-sa, pp. 123-132.

59 Ministry of National Defense, Appointment Order (Army), No. 3, Clause 1 (7 July 1950), and No. 150, Clause 1 (December 5).

60 The KMA was closed temporarily, on 8 July 1950. Yuksa samsimnyŏn-sa, p. 132.
The Second Cadet Class

Although its cadets could not graduate from the KMA, this class was the first recruited to a four-year course. Over 3,000 applicants took the entrance examinations held between December 22, 1949 and January 12, 1950. At first on June 1, 1950, 449 men entered the school on probation. But only 334 men, screened through a final character test, attended the entrance ceremony on June 6.

From the time of their entrance until North Korea's invasion on June 25, they received only rudimentary training including M1 rifle handling, except for range shooting. Nevertheless, they were put into the battle of P'och'ŏn and consecutive battles at T'aenŭng and Suwŏn area with the First Cadet Class (the Tenth Class). Eighty-five of them were dead or missing in those battles. The rest of them entered a combined school established at Tongnae near Pusan on August 15, 1950. They graduated from the Combined

61 Ibid., pp. 121, 146; Sawyer, Military Advisors in Korea, pp. 89-90; see also a public notice for subscription in Tong'a ilbo, 26 November 1949.


63 Yuksa samsimnyŏn-sa, pp. 122, 133.

64 Koreans called the school "Yukkun chonghap hakkyo" [The Korean Army Combined School], while Americans "The Korean Army Ground General School." A six-week course of this consisted of general training for four weeks and a specialized branch of training for two weeks. See ibid., pp. 122, 134; Sawyer, Military Advisors in Korea, p. 151.
School as "Chonghap che ilki, or iki" [The Combined First, or Second Class] after six weeks of training. Therefore even though it was the last class which entered the KMA before the Korean War, the "Second Cadet Class" is not recognized officially as KMA graduates, but as combined school graduates.

The educational periods and the origins of the candidates of each class are as in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classes</th>
<th>Educational Period</th>
<th>Origins</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>7 weeks</td>
<td>Foreign Armies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>11 weeks</td>
<td>Foreign Armies/Constabulary/Civilians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td>3 months</td>
<td>Constabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth</td>
<td>4 months</td>
<td>Constabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>Civilians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth</td>
<td>3 months</td>
<td>Constabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventh</td>
<td>6/3 months</td>
<td>Civilians/Constabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Seventh</td>
<td>8 weeks</td>
<td>Foreign Armies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eighth</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>Civilians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Eighth:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group I</td>
<td>3 weeks</td>
<td>Foreign Armies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group II</td>
<td>5 weeks</td>
<td>Kwangbok Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group III</td>
<td>12 weeks</td>
<td>Civilians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group IV</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subgroup 1</td>
<td>5 weeks</td>
<td>Kwangbok Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subgroup 2</td>
<td>9 weeks</td>
<td>Civilians/Foreign Armies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ninth</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>Civilians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenth(First Cadet)</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>Civilians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Cadet</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>Civilians</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Planned)

In this early period, there were four major potential pools for the OTS candidates--the foreign army veterans (mainly the Japanese or Manchukuo Army), the anti-Japanese resistance groups (mainly the Kwangbok Army), the NCOs and
enlisted men of the Constabulary or the subsequent Army, and civilians. The first group formed the mainstream of the first two classes, as well as the English Language School officers. The rest of them also joined the officer corps through the two special classes. The second group, the dissatisfied outsiders under the American Military Government, joined the officer corps mainly through the Special Eighth Class just after the establishment of the Korean government. The third group formed the most part of the Third, Fourth, and Sixth Classes, and parts of the rest of the classes except the special ones.\textsuperscript{65} Lastly the major portion of the Fifth, Seventh, Eighth, Ninth, and Tenth classes were civilians.

One of the most conspicuous characteristics in the above distribution of the major potential pools was that those who had experience in the Japanese or Manchukuo Army dominated the first two classes as in the English Language School. Eventually they came to dominate the highest positions in the hierarchy of the Korean Army. Meanwhile, the graduates from the two special classes including most of the Kwangbok Army soldiers could never reach those positions. The other characteristic was that in the civilian

\textsuperscript{65} Probably one of the major reasons why leftist infiltrations into the OTS occurred only in the Second, Third and Fourth Classes, stemmed from the fact that those classes selected candidates mainly from the Constabulary in which the members of several leftist private armies were included.
classes there were a number of young students who escaped from North Korea and Communist oppression. This was notable particularly in the Fifth and Seventh classes. Therefore it was impossible for the Communists to agitate in those classes.

In general, some kind of pattern of career development, rough as it was, existed between the origins of the candidates and their educational periods. First, for those who had former foreign military experiences or anti-Japanese resistance careers (the first two classes and two special classes), the training periods were relatively shorter than for others, which fluctuated from three to twelve weeks. Thus, remedial instruction was strong in their training. Second, former NCOs or enlisted men of the Constabulary and the subsequent Army received a three-month training. Finally, civilian classes (except the Tenth Class) had a six-month program. Since the first three months of the whole period were allocated to recruit training, their actual educational period as officer candidates was very similar to that of a three-month program. Therefore, the three-month course was the most typical program of the KMA in its "OTS period." 66

66 This meant the period between 1946 and 1950 the period before a full four-year program was established.
Of all subjects in the "OTS period" of the KMA, the preceptive speech and the marching and quartering training were most noticeable. The former is related to professional values, the latter with professional skill. Superintendents, commandants of the candidates corps, and other instructors gave the officer candidates inspirational speeches whenever they could do so. They used to give speeches even after the regular daily tasks. The main theme of the preceptive speeches was patriotism, stressing the "Korean spirit" and loyalty to the country and people. The basic tone of those speeches was based on anti-Communism. There were also other themes such as honor, courage, integrity, and sacrifice.

In the meantime, the marching and quartering training, practiced usually at the last stage of each education, was an all-round training which synthesized formation, organization, marching, reconnaissance, shooting, small-unit attack and defense, communication, supply, and quartering. Generally it continued for a few days in the field. This intensive, practical training compensated effectively for the weaknesses of the short-term training in the early period of the school.

However, there were also many problems in this period. First of all, there were continuous conflicts between the American and Japanese military doctrine. Most of the
training was a mixture of the two different weapon systems and tactics. For instance, the first four classes were equipped and trained with Japanese small arms. In the Third and Fourth Class the American rifles and light machine guns were barely introduced. Although the officer candidates received the formation and organization training based on the American military doctrine, the small-unit tactics were based on the American military doctrine, the small-unit tactics were based on the Japanese doctrine. The Japanese Infantry Drill Manual was used like a text in the early classes and even still used in the Ninth Class. For the first time, the Fifth Class began to train with American rifles and to study American Field Manuals (FM). However, since there were few translated American FMs, and since nearly all of the Korean instructors had a Japanese military background, Japanese tactics, which American advisors called "banzai charges,"\(^{67}\) prevailed over American ones until in the Ninth Class. At last, in the Tenth Class, all vestiges of the Japanese military doctrine were expelled by the American Field Manuals.

Next, there was a lack of an educational environment such as facilities and supply system. Originally the T'aen-ŭng site was a training camp for Korean "volunteers" to the Japanese Army. Although it included several barracks and a drill field, the camp lacked general facilities for the

\(^{67}\) Sawyer, Military Advisors in Korea, p. 25.
training of officer candidates. For example, since there were no baths, the candidates had to do their everyday washing at a brook near the camp even in winter. Furthermore, the supply system for the school was primitive. The candidates were continuously deprived by their meal service, both in quality and quantity. Similar problems with clothes and educational materials existed.

In fact, in its early stage, the OTS started its education with practically nothing but its members' "bodies" and "will." Without the will "to make" and "to be" officers of their own liberated country, trainers and trainees of the OTS could never have prevailed over these difficulties.
CHAPTER VI
THE ROLE OF KOREAN POLITICAL AND MILITARY LEADERSHIP

While the anti-Communist ideological orientation of the Korean Army officer corps was initiated by the American policy in Korea in terms of building a bulwark against the Soviet expansion in the peninsula, the Korean political and military elites also played a major role to the outcome, particularly after the establishment of the Republic of Korea. President Syngman Rhee needed anti-Communist ideology not only for the political legitimacy of the new Republic, but also for the consolidation of his power internally. Rhee masterfully controlled the military, ideologically and politically. He favored strong anti-Communist generals; and, in the same time, he maintained a "check and balance" between the various factions of the army leadership and established a civil control pattern over the military, based on the personal loyalty to him.

Meanwhile, the army elites also actively adopted the anti-Communist ideology as their ethical and professional basis in order to establish the legitimacy and cohesion of
their leadership. The army elites, mainly former veterans of the Japanese or Manchukuo Army, desperately needed to change their image from the pro-Japanese collaborators to the guardians of the new Republic. The reckless leftist rebellions and mutinies in the pre-Korean War period gave the army elites the momentum to legitimize their leadership.

This chapter examines the roles of the Korean political and military leadership in the anti-Communist political socialization of the Korean army officer corps.

A. PRESIDENT RHEE AND HIS CONTROL OVER THE MILITARY

The one most remarkable characteristic of the Rhee administration’s political ideology was anti-Communism. Rhee himself was a well-known ultra anti-Communist. Anti-Communism provided the momentum for his political ascendance to grab the presidency in the separate southern government. Moreover he used it not only as the means to legitimize his regime vis-à-vis the Communist North Korea, but as the weapon to clean up his political opponents. Anti-Communism, so to speak, was a magic cane for Syngman Rhee.

As mentioned in Chapter II, Rhee came back to Korea on October 16, 1945. The occupation authorities arranged
Rhee's return in order to provide a spearhead to the right wing political movement. His reputation and prestige was legendary so that every political party offered its support. Even the Korean People's Republic offered him the chairmanship. But he had at first an ambitious plan to unite all Rightist and Leftist parties and to become an uncontested political leader. On October 23, Rhee announced to establish Taehan tongnip ch'oksŏng chung'ang hyŏbŭi-hoe [the Central Council for the Rapid Realization of Korean Independence: CCRRKI] and called for all Koreans to join it.\(^1\) Realizing that they could not take an initiative in the CCRRKI movement, however, Pak Hŏn-yŏng and his radical Communist followers refused to join it. Rhee rejected officially the offer of the chairmanship of the Korean People's Republic on November 7. Since then Rhee and the Communist Party exchanged sharp denunciations against each other during November and December of 1945. Rhee declared on December 17 in his press release, "My Position against the Communist Party," the "Korea doesn't want the Communist Party and its destructive extremists."\(^2\) On December 19, in his regular Wednesday night radio address, Rhee not only blamed China's internal war on Communists but held Communists in Korea responsible for organized terror. He also said Commu-


nists "invented the name, so-called People's Republic, to show the world we are divided among ourselves." He then urged all patriotic Koreans to band together to fight "those people whose work is to destroy and prevent unity." The Communist also declared their readiness to fight back against Rhee. Rhee simply could not reconcile and unite the Leftists and the Rightists altogether under his leadership.

Rhee realized that he needed his own political machine, which he lacked due to his absence for thirty-three years at home, with which he could bid for power. Rhee came to ally with the Korean Democratic Party (KDP), the leading Rightist political party in South Korea, which, in turn, needed a popular patriotic "face mask" in order to neutralize public denounce as it was called collaborator's group. There were several reasons that Rhee came to bet his political future on the KDP. First the KDP was the richest party in terms of political funds since it embraced most of rich people including businessmen, bankers, and landlords. Second, the KDP was the closest political group to the American occupation authorities, for KDP members and their supporters occupied almost every key position in the bureaucratic system of the military government, including the powerful Korean National Police. For instance, Cho Pyŏng-ok who was one of the leading members of the KDP.

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3 SCAP, Monthly Summary, No. 3, p. 203.
became the chief of the police. Finally, and most importantly, the KDP's political doctrines of capitalism, pro-Americanism, and anti-Communism fit Rhee's own political philosophies. In the meantime, the KDP badly needed Rhee in its leadership position in order to evade the criticism that their wealth and fortunes came from their collaboration with the Japanese. The alliance between Rhee and the KDP was so intense that five out of seven members of the CCRRKI executive committee were KDP leaders.

Nevertheless, Rhee and the KDP alliance itself was not strong enough to take domination in South Korean politics. There were still strong Leftist organizations, and even more popular and nationalistic Korean Provisional Government (KPG) in exile led by Kim Koo. However, a special issue made it possible for Rhee to take the political initiative. It was the issue of trusteeship.

When the Korean trusteeship was publicized after the Moscow Conference in late December 1945, the nationalistic KPG immediately announced its objection to the trusteeship, while Rhee remained silent. On January 7, 1946, only after the Leftists declared their pro-trusteeship posture on Jan-

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4 For Cho's appointment as the police chief, see Press Releases, 24 October 1945, Item 5, RG 332, Box 27.

5 For the alliance between Rhee and KDP, see Kim Chin-hak and Han Ch'ol-yong, Chehön kukhoe-sa [A History of the Constituent National Assembly] (Seoul: Sinjo ch'ulp'ansa, 1954), p. 60.

uary 2. Rhee announced his anti-trusteeship position and began to seek an united front with the KPG. In actuality, the trusteeship issue touched the deepseated nationalistic instinct of all Koreans. Rhee tried to take political initiative through capitalizing the nationalistic sentiment and attacking the Leftists as the national traitors to sell the nation to the Soviets. On February 1, 1946, Rhee succeeded to form *Pisang kunghun hoeui* [the Emergency National Council: ENC] by uniting his CCRRK and Kim Koo’s KPG.\(^7\) Kim Koo, the real nationalist and politically far less ambitious man, willingly conceded the chairmanship of the ENC to Rhee in order to strengthen the anti-trusteeship front without political conflict.

In fact, Rhee saw the trusteeship whirlpool as the chance to achieve his separate government objective and ultimate political power. His anti-trusteeship movement was no more than a vehicle to carry the purpose. Rhee and the Korean Democratic Party allegedly criticized the Soviet Union as the trusteeship originator.\(^8\) Through this, Rhee could easily mobilize the nationalists into his anti-Communist camp. For Rhee, the anti-trusteeship movement was the "main source of energy to magnify the anti-Communist ideology."\(^9\) And the more impasse between the Right and the

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Left developed, the better the possibility for separate government grew.

To achieve his separate government objective, Rhee never hesitated to denounce and desert even his friends and supporters. When the first Soviet-American Joint Commission opened to discuss the establishment of a united provisional government in March 1946, Rhee immediately resigned from his chairmanship position of the Representative Democratic Council, the advisory committee to the military government, and intensified his campaigns for anti-trusteeship and separate government. His Chŏng’up address on June 3, known as the first public announcement calling for a separate southern government, was the official starting point for those campaigns. Rhee also tried to break up the Left-Right Coalition Committee, a centrist movement that was set up right after the adjournment of the first Soviet-American Joint Commission in mid-1946. Rhee not only accused Hodge but denounced Kim Kyu-sik and Yŏ Un-hyŏng, the co-chairmen of the Coalition Committee, saying that they were selling the Korean people out to the Soviet hands. An official report evaluated that Rhee’s anti-trusteeship movement was not only an effort to capitalize on the nationalistic sentiment of the Korean people but also "as a deliberate attempt to put the Coalition Committee on the spot, making

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10 For more discussions on the separate government issue, see Chapter II, second section of this study.
it appear unpatriotic and pro-Communistic through its failure to take a more positive stand on the Trusteeship issue."

Moreover, Rhee plotted a bribery scandal to injure Kim's reputation, and tried to assassinate Yŏ.  

There are a number of sources and episodes which indicate Rhee's greediness for power and his uncompromising character. Even though the occupation authorities arranged Rhee's return to Korea to endorse the rightist movement a momentum, they came to dislike Rhee especially since the anti-trusteeship embroilment in early 1946. Military Governor Arnold described Rhee as a "completely self-seeking" man.  

Hodge, in his briefing for Undersecretary of the Army Draper, complained that "Every move by US that he [Rhee] does not like, he blames on me....He hates me.... because he thinks I have blocked his complete success of being the head of the government in South Korea...." 

Meanwhile, to his cleverness, whenever he met Hodge or other key occupation officials Rhee used it as the means to


12 For the Kim's slander, see "Activities of Left-wing Parties," RG 332, Box 29, pp. 51-52. For Yŏ's assassination plot, see ibid., p. 51. For Yŏ's eventual assassination, on July 19, 1947, see Song, Haebang samnyŏn-sa, Vol. I, pp. 184-186.

13 Memorandum of Conversation with Major General Archibald Arnold, 9 October 1946, FRUS, 1946, VIII, p. 743.

manipulate the Korean mass that he had the blessing of the United States government.\footnote{15} In another conference with journalists, Hodge discerningly predicted that "He [Rhee] would be a good dictator."\footnote{16} The hardest, but more accurate, criticism on Rhee came from Hodge's advisor Jacobs when he evaluated Rhee like this: "[Rhee] is a vain man, loves flattery, and would sell his soul to be the Chief of State of a United Korea or even over South Korea if there is no United Korea."\footnote{17} An interesting account, written by a Korean, also shows Rhee's self-righteous personality. It states that "Dr. Rhee's paramount shortcoming has been his inability to compromise with the other fellow. He would have others work for him but never with them."\footnote{18}

In spite of those personal problems and ill feelings between Rhee and occupation officials, the Americans seemed to have no other choice but go along with Rhee when they

\footnote{15} For more details on Rhee's mass manipulating skill, see \textit{ibid.}, pp. 20-21, 26-27, 29.

\footnote{16} "Off the Record," 23 July 1947, RG 332, Box 29, p. 9.

\footnote{17} Joseph E. Jacobs to the Secretary of State, 7 August 1947, \textit{FRUS, 1947}, VI, p. 746.

\footnote{18} "Dr. Syng Man Rhee's Political Background--Causes and Reasons for his Present Status," an account, written by unidentified Korean, filed in G-2 section of USAFIRK, 23 September 1947, RG 332, Box 34, p. 4. This account is filed with a note which evaluates this as true and confirmable. The writer's name must be Pak Yong-man, one of major contenders of Rhee in Hawaii in 1930s, considering the indicated factor that the Independence Society organized at the writer's home. Hereafter "Rhee's Political Background."
decided to establish a separate southern government in mid-1947 in order to stem the Soviet expansion. Simply there was no reliable anti-Communist Korean leader who could contend with Rhee. When Undersecretary of the Army Draper asked a question whether there were any other substitutes for Rhee, General Brown, who was chief commissioner of American delegation to the Soviet-American Joint Commission, replied that Rhee "is the only leader today who has any national appeal." 19 Furthermore, Rhee consolidated his position among Korean bureaucrats of the military government. A reliable account indicates as follows:

Seemingly, he is still in the driver's seat of the Right Wing not because of his sterling qualities as a leader, not because of what he has accomplished since his theatrical entrance into Korea, but because of circumstances with which he has very little to do. Korean personnel of the Military Government and the police had no choice insofar as political leanings were concerned. They had to get in line with the democratic banner of Dr. Rhee. 20

Similarly, an American official report also evaluates that "the pro-Japanese and national traitors" who had collaborated with the Japanese in the past "are widely believed by the Koreans to have been reinstated in positions of author-

19 "Orientation for Draper," 23 September 1947, RG 332, Box 29, p. 25. Interestingly enough, however, Jacobs answered that "I think the rightist would follow anyone to whom we gave our blessing, and if we clearly indicated that we would back him, they would get a lot of support, simply because we were backing him." See ibid.

20 "Rhee's Political Background," 23 September 1947, RG 332, Box 34, p. 5.
ity after having joined Dr. Rhee's camp. "21

At last, on July 20, 1948, the National Assembly elected Syngman Rhee as the first president of the Republic of Korea. Rhee's long and greedy efforts came to bear the fruit. At the same time, however, it is also true that he might have been the only person who realized the compromising international power relations over the Korean peninsula in which the Korean people did have little room for self-determination to establish a unified and independent nation. Rhee already foresaw the way of separate government in early 1946 when he intensified anti-trusteeship movement at the juncture of breakdown of the Soviet-American Joint Commission. He was a realist with an amazing discerning power in that sense. In comparison, the nationalist leaders like Kim Koo and Kim Kyu-sik were idealists who ignored the surrounding international power politics, even though their patriotism were unmatchable.

After he became the president of the new Republic, Rhee deserted the Korean Democratic Party and tried to build up an organizational cohesion based on personal loyalty to him.22 Direct control over the military based on personal


22 Rhee not only rejected a parliamentary system of government to prevent the KDP members to share the political power in his regime, but nominated Yi Yun-yŏng as the prime minister instead of Kim Sŏng-su who was recommended by the KDP. The National Assembly rejected to approve Rhee's nominee Yi. Later in February 1949, KDP members
loyalty and the principle of "checks and balances" was the most salient example of it.

At first, Rhee tried to maintain a balance between various factions in controlling the military. He appointed Yi Pŏm-sŏk, a famous Kwangbok Army general, as the Prime Minister and Minister of Defense. Yi Êng-jun, the first Chief of Staff of the Army, represented the "older generation" of the Japanese Military Academy graduates. But Rhee already appointed Ch'ae Pyŏng-dok, the most trusted and the forerunner of the "younger generation" of the Japanese Military Academy graduates, as the Chief of Staff of the Ministry of Defense. This triangular disposition artfully maintained checks and balances between the nationalist and pro-Japanese forces, and the older and the younger generations.

joined together with the Korean Independent Party (the KPG line) to form a new opposition party, the Democratic Nationalist Party [Minju kung'min-dang]. See Han, Han-guk chôngdang-sa, pp. 111-113.

Yi Êng-jun, a fifty-nine years old former Japanese army colonel and a 26th class (1914) graduate of the Japanese Military Academy, was recommended by Chang Taeck-sang, the chief of the Metropolitan police and a KDP member. See Yi Êng-jun, Autobiography, pp. 263-264; interview, General Yi Êng-jun (6 April 1976).

This position was abolished after Ch'ae transferred to the army chief position in May 1949. Ch'ae, thirty-four years old, was former Japanese army major and a 49th class (1937) graduate of the Japanese Military Academy. See Han, Ch'ang-gun, p. 44.
However, this triangular balance did not go long. Rhee's another tactics to control the military relied on swift personnel changes. Moreover, Yi Pöm-sŏk's political and military influence grew rapidly since former Kwangbok Army soldiers came into the army officer corps through the Special Eighth Class of the OTS under Yi's arrangement. On March 22, 1949, Rhee relieved Yi Pöm-sŏk from the position of defense minister. Sin Sŏng-mo, formerly a captain of the foreign merchant ship and without any military background, took the position. Since Sin was a typical yes man and no more than a "paper" minister, Rhee came to control directly over the military. Kwangbok Army veterans lost their foothold and were transferred to the positions in Hoguk-kun [the National Defense Force], a reserve force organization of the army. And on May 9, 1949, Ch'ae replaced Yi Ŭng-jun as the Chief of Staff of the Army. Yi faded away and never came back to any key position above divisional commander.

25 See Chapter V, Special Eighth Class.


27 Han, Ch'ang-gun, pp. 70-71. For more details on Hoguk-kun, see Yukkun bonbu [GHQ, ROK Army], Yukkun Paljŏn-sa, 1945-1953.7 [History of Development of the ROK Army] (Seoul: Yukkun bonbu, 1961), pp. 241, 248-249.
But the conflict between the older and the younger generations of the Japanese Military Academy graduates continued for a while. This time the representative of the older generations was Kim Sŏk-wŏn, then the commander of the First Division. Kim, a 27th Class (1915) graduates of the Japanese Military Academy and former colonel of the Japanese army, was the most famous and flamboyant figure among the Japanese army veterans. In late 1930s Kim was publicized as a war hero in the Sino-Japanese War due to his brilliant war records in part, and also due to the dramatization of his merits by the Japanese in an effort to lure more Korean volunteers into their army. He was the symbol of Samurai-style old soldier, with a Kaiser mustache, characterized by the virtues of bravery and loyalty. A stern anti-Communist and a refugee from North Korea after 1945, Kim joined in the Korean army through the Special Eighth Class of the OTS in 1948. The opening cause of the conflict between Ch’ae and Kim was the so-called “Bug’o Incident.”

In August 1949, Kim seized twenty trucks—full of bug’o [dried pollack: usually North Korean products] from several civilian merchants who were trading auto parts and medical supplies to the North for bug’o with the approval of Ch’ae. Kim argued that the trading was the symbol of corruption.

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and acts benefiting the enemy, while Ch'ae defended it as a political maneuver to keep in touch with the North Koreans. As the incident was publicized and became a potential political burden to him, President Rhee swiftly discharged both men from service on October 1, 1949.

Rhee appointed Sin Tae-yŏng, one of older generations as a 26th Class (1944) graduate of the Japanese Military Academy and former lieutenant colonel, as the Acting Chief of Staff of the Army.\(^{29}\) He was regarded as "colorless" and submissive figure. It seemed the older generations won the game. But it turned out to be quite the opposite. In less than two months, Rhee recalled Ch'ae into the active duty service, but not Kim. Moreover, on April 10, 1949, only six months after he was discharged from service, Ch'ae retained the position of Army Chief of Staff. In the meantime, Kim was briefly reactivated as the divisional commander during the early period of the Korean War. The old soldiers faded away as the younger generations rose during the vortex of the war.

After the older generations gone, however, Rhee made another rivalry among the younger generations between the Japanese Military Academy graduates and the Manchukuo Military Institutes graduates. During 1948-1950 period when the "old versus young" rivalry among the Japanese Military

\(^{29}\) Han, ibid., pp. 210-211. Sin was the only acting chief in the Korean army history.
Academy graduates was existing. Manchukuo Military Institutes graduates usually remained at the subordinate positions. For instance, the first Army Chief of Staff Yi ŭng-jun’s GHQ staffs were mainly Manchukuo army veterans, including later days’ big names such as Chŏng Il-gwŏn, Paek Sŏn-yŏp, Kim Paek-il, Yi Han-lim, and Kang Mun-bong. Chŏng Il-gwŏn, the leader of the Manchukuo army faction, finally became Chief of Staff of the Army on June 30, 1950, replacing Ch’ae who lost early battles of the Korean War. Since then, through the 1950s, the rivalry between the Japanese army veterans and the Manchukuo army veterans could be seen from the replacing pattern of the Army Chiefs of Staff in below table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>order</th>
<th>name</th>
<th>rank</th>
<th>term</th>
<th>origin</th>
<th>birth place</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yi ŭng-jun</td>
<td>MG</td>
<td>15 Dec 48–8 May 49</td>
<td>JMA#26</td>
<td>North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ch’ae Pyŏng-dŏk</td>
<td>MG</td>
<td>9 May 49–30 Sep 49</td>
<td>JMA#49</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sin Tae-yŏng</td>
<td>MG</td>
<td>1 Oct 49–9 Apr 50</td>
<td>JMA#26</td>
<td>South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Ch’ae Pyŏng-dŏk</td>
<td>MG</td>
<td>1 Apr 50–29 Jun 50</td>
<td>JMA#49</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Chŏng Il-gwŏn</td>
<td>LTG</td>
<td>30 Jun 50–22 Jun 51</td>
<td>MMI#5</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Yi Chong-ch’an</td>
<td>LTG</td>
<td>23 Jun 51–22 Jul 52</td>
<td>JMA#49</td>
<td>S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Paek Sŏn-yŏp</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>23 Jul 52–13 Feb 54</td>
<td>MMI#9</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Chŏng Il-gwŏn</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>14 Feb 54–26 Jun 56</td>
<td>MMI#5</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Yi Hyŏng-kŭn</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>27 Jun 56–17 May 57</td>
<td>JMA#56</td>
<td>S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Paek Sŏn-yŏp</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>18 May 57–22 Feb 59</td>
<td>MMI#9</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. JMA#26: Japanese Military Academy, 26th Class  
b. MMI#5: Manchukuo Military Institute, 5th Class

During 1950s, however, the overall favor went to the Manchukuo army veterans. Particularly, after the famous con-
frontation between Rhee and the sixth chief Yi Chong-ch’an in 1952. Rhee came to favor heavily for the Manchukuo Military Institutes graduates. 30

Beyond the control over the military based on the "checks and balances" between the several factions in the Army, President Rhee also wanted to take a firm grip over the military elites in terms of the ideological orientation. Since he wanted his regime being supported by strong anti-Communist armed forces to stand against the North Korean Communist regime, Rhee heavily favored anti-Communist generals. One of the major reasons of his favoritism for those who had the Japanese military background, either in the Japanese army or in the Manchukuo army, could be interpreted in the same way of anti-Communist context because the Japanese military cadres normally had the strong anti-Communist sentiments. Japan was the strongest anti-Communist power in Asia before its defeat in the Pacific War, and its Army was the cutting edge of its anti-Communism. The Manchukuo army, created as an auxiliary to

30 In spring 1952 Rhee ordered Yi Chong-ch’an to pull two combat divisions from the frontline to the Pusan, the wartime capital, to impose a martial law in order to assure his reelection by amending the electoral process. Yi, a JMA graduate who was believing in military’s political neutrality rejected the order. Rhee relieved Yi from the position of the Army Chief of Staff. See Kang Sŏng-jae, Ch’am kunin Yi Chong-ch’an chang’gun [A real Soldier, General Yi Chong-ch’an] (Seoul: Tong’a ilbo-sa, 1966), pp. 72-86, 97-98. See also Clark, From the Danube to the Yalu, p. 154. General Kim Chong-myŏn also gave same account. Kim was then G-2 of Yi. Interview, General Kim Chong-myŏn (14 May 1977).
the Japanese Kwantung Army, was trained not for large-scale military operations but for counterinsurgency operations against the Chinese and Korean anti-Japanese guerrilla forces. And the anti-Japanese guerrilla forces in Manchuria were usually connected with the Russians or the Chinese Communist movements. Thus the Manchukuo army cadres came to incorporate anti-Communism through their military service.

There was a strong tendency for President Rhee to favor those who had the northern geographical origins. The North Korean refugees were usually the victims of the Communist purge at there and, as a result, became the strongest anti-Communist elements in the South. The Army officers of North Korean birth were not exceptional. Seven out of first ten Army Chiefs of Staff, as can be seen above table,

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\[\text{31 For instance, majority of Koreans living in Manchuria who were sympathetic to the anti-Japanese independence movements usually looked to the Russians as potential allies to their cause. See Chong-Sik Lee, The Politics of Korean Nationalism (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965), p. 259.}\]

\[\text{32 Manchukuo army veterans recalled that they came to realize about the "ruthless and inhumane" characters of the Communists during they engaged in counterinsurgency operations in Manchuria. Interviews with Generals Ch'ong Il-gwön (22 June 1977), Paek Sŏn-yŏp (6 July 1977), and Kang Mun-bong (11 July 1976).}\]

\[\text{33 An American official report confirmed this fact that "Refugees from North Korea...tend to be bitterly anti-Communist in sentiment." See "Report on South Korea," RG 332, Box 29, p. 6. See also "History of Korean Politics," 26 July 1946, File No. 8-18, Counter Intelligence Corps, USAFIR, RG 332, Box 28, p. 5.}\]
had North Korean backgrounds. One of the main reasons of why Rhee favored the Manchukuo army veterans was that they were strong anti-Communists with North Korean origins. According to the above table, each of Chŏng Il-gwŏn and Paek Sŏn-yŏp, forerunners among the Manchukuo army veterans, was two-time Army Chief of Staff and they held the position for more than seven years in 1950s.

The other example of Rhee's ideological control over the Army was the maintaining of inspection organizations, such as the Military Police Command and Counter intelligence Corps (CIC), which were directly operated by Rhee over all service branches. As will be discussed in the later section of this chapter, the CIC was originally established in the Army to investigate Leftist factions of the Army right after the Yŏsu-Sunch'ŏn Rebellion in late 1948. A tide of "Red Scare" swept over the entire new-born Republic, and massive purges against Leftist soldiers followed. Through those series of massive arrests and purges the CIC quickly became a "supraregal" organization and its head Kim

34 Almost more than ninety percent of the Manchukuo army veterans who joined the ROK Army officer corps had North Korean origins. Interviews with Generals Chŏng Il-gwŏn (22 June 1977), Paek Sŏn-yŏp (8 July 1977), and Kang Mun-bong (11 July 1976).

Ch'ang-yong rose as Rhee's powerman. Meanwhile those inspection organizations rendered a lot of meritorious services to the ROK Army in removing Leftist factions in pre-Korean War period, it was also true that they abused too much of their mighty power in the manner of "witch hunting" and, as a result, became a tool of tip-off politics for Rhee especially in 1950s.

B. MILITARY LEADERSHIP, LEFTIST REBELLIONS, AND THEIR IMPACT

When President Rhee exercised his artful skill of control over the military politically and ideologically to consolidate the political legitimacy of his regime in South Korea, it met more than enthusiastic responses from the military elites. In actuality the military leadership itself urgently needed the anti-Communist ideology as the new professional and ethical basis for its own cohesion and

36 For the detailed story of the rise and fall of Kim, see Chang Ch'ang-guk, Yuksa choröpsaeng [The Military Academy Graduates] (Seoul: Chung'ang ilbo-sa, 1984), pp. 76-77, 211-221. Kim, former enlisted man served in the military police branch of the Manchukuo army and a Third Class graduate of the OTS, was assassinated on January 3, 1956.

37 For instance the Military Police Command, headed by Wŏn Yong-dŏk who was another Manchukuo army veteran, began to exercise jurisdiction over all service branches in late 1952 and even dealt with many civilian ideological suspects. In this process, Won deeply involved in politics and became Rhee's hatchet man together with Kim Ch'ang-yong. But Wŏn and Kim were in rivalry relations in Rhee's checks and balances game.
legitimacy. Thus, the military elites actively involved themselves in establishing the anti-Communist ideological value system in the armed forces.

The first Defense Minister Yi Pŏm-sŏk was a famous anti-Communist. Yi wanted to educate the officers and enlisted men with anti-Communist ideology, arguing that "Our defense forces urgently needed the spiritual armament with strong anti-Communism in order to fight against the Communist army." He formulated the so-called Three Big Oaths of the National Defense Forces and made it rule that every serviceman recite the Oaths at every roll-call. Among the Oaths, the second one read like this: "Let’s remember that the Communists killed our commanders and fellow soldiers." 

Yi Pŏm-sŏk established on November 29, 1948, the Political Bureau in the Ministry of Defense in order to manage the ideological education. He also established the Fourth Bureau, a special operational organization for countering against the North Korean guerrilla forces, together with the Army Special Unit for Reconnaissance on

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39 It was formulated right after the Yŏsu-Sunch’ŏn Rebellion. Han, *Ch’ang-gun*, p. 129; Yi Ŭng-jun, *Autobiography*, p. 267.

40 Later it had been changed as the Bureau of Troop Information and Education due to the opposition from the KMAG. Han, *Ch’ang-gun*, p. 128; Ko, *Kun*, pp. 72. 74-75.
November 25, 1948.\textsuperscript{41}

Meanwhile the first Chief of Staff of the Army Yi Üng-jun was also well-known anti-Communist. He thought that the most urgent task as the Army Chief was the "Sasang t'ong'il [the Unification of Ideology]" of the Army officers and men based on anti-Communism.\textsuperscript{42} For the educational purpose he formulated the so-called "Servicemen's Precepts," a seven-paragraphed guideline for daily activities. The seventh paragraph stated that "A sincere soldier resolutely denounces the extreme destructionists and never be shaken by their propaganda."\textsuperscript{43} This phrase reveals that how much he was concerned about Communist infiltrations and propaganda in the Army at the time of various Leftist rebellions and mutinies during 1948-1949 period.

Yi Üng-jun recalled the past that he and other Korean officers strongly asked the American occupation authorities to take thought screens for the Constabulary applicants when the authorities mobilized the constabularymen in early 1946. The Korean officers argued that it was necessary to keep the Leftists out of the Constabulary if the occupation authorities wanted to establish an armed forces loyal and faithful to the cause of democracy. But the American officers didn't accept the suggestion, arguing that the democ-

\textsuperscript{41} Ko, \textit{ibid.}, pp. 72, 76; Han, \textit{ibid.}, p. 128.

\textsuperscript{42} Yi Üng-jun, \textit{Autobiography}, p. 265.

\textsuperscript{43} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 266.
racy meant that everybody should be eligible to enter the Constabulary no matter how one's personal belief might be and that once anybody entered the Constabulary he could be controlled by military regulations. However, the price that the new ROK government had to pay for not doing thought screen turned out to be extremely high when a number of severe leftist mutinies and rebellions shook the military and political basis of the ROK in 1948 and 1949.

The leftist infiltration into the Constabulary was not an accidental phenomenon but an systematic placement as the preparation for a war of "national liberation" in later days. Originally, right after the liberation, the Leftists tried to have their own armed forces. For example, Chosŏn kukkan chunbidae [National Preparatory Army] was the paramilitary organization established by the de facto leftist government of the Korean People's Republic. After the occupation authorities disbanded all private armies, as discussed in Chapter IV, many private army cadres entered the English Language School. Some leftists such as Cho Pyŏng-kŏn, O Il-kyun, Ha Chae-pal, Ch'oe Nam-kŭn, Kim Chong-sŏk, and several others graduated the ELS. Among them O and Cho served at OTS as instructor and candidate company

44 Ibid., pp. 240-241; Sawyer, Military Advisors in Korea, p. 50; interviews with Generals Yi Ùng-jun (6 April 1976), Yi Hyŏng-kŭn (14 May 1977), and Chŏng Il-gwŏn (22 June 1977).

45 The NPA was the largest private army with more than sixty thousand members. Han, Ch'ang-gun, p. 37.
commander for the first four classes. This fact might explain the reason why there were so many leftist graduates among the early classes of the OTS.\(^{46}\) Ha Chae-pal, former chief of staff of the NPA’s North Kyŏngsang province branch, volunteered to serve at Taegu area where he brought a number of NPA members into the Sixth Regiment in its creation. Moreover, after the October uprising of 1946 that swept over the southeastern area of the peninsula, many leftists who were chased by police went into the Constabulary.\(^{47}\) The Constabulary easily became the hiding place for the leftists due to the lack of thorough identity screens in its period of creation and quick expansion.

The occupation authorities of course realized the leftist infiltration into the Constabulary. In his report to the JCS, on August 25, 1947, Hodge stated that "There was a noticeable increase of Communist penetration into all key activities and installations including the Constabulary and to lesser extent, the Police."\(^{48}\) However, the occupation authorities did not track down the infiltrators but let the

\(^{46}\) Yuksa samsimnyŏn-sa, pp. 69-87; Chang, Yuksa chŏrŏpsaeng, p. 105.


\(^{48}\) Form CG USAFIK to CINCPE, JCS, ZGCCG 1066, 25 August 1947, RG 332, Box 29.
tumor come to a head.

The starting point of the leftist rebellions was the so-called "4.3 Riot" in Cheju-do [Cheju Island] began on April 3, 1948. The leftists tried to obstruct the imminent "5.10 election," sanctioned by the United Nations, which would pave the road for a separate Rightist government. On April 3, leftist guerrilla units attacked a number of police boxes and occupied several coastal villages. This was the opening of the Cheju-do Rebellion which lasted about four and a half year and caused about thirty to forty thousand casualties, or about fifteen percent of its population.

The Constabulary, for the first time since its creation, came to commit in counterinsurgency operation since the police force could not handle the rebellion. At that time, the Ninth Regiment of about nine hundred men force stationed in Cheju-do. The American military government reinforced a battalion from the Fifth Regiment in Pusan and the


50 USAMGIK, South Korean Interim Government Activities, No. 31 (April 1947), p. 179. and No. 32, pp. 156-157; Merrill, "Internal Warfare in Korea," p. 139; Han, Ch’ang-gun, pp. 202-203. For more details, see Chang, Yuksa chōropaesang, pp. 113-126.
majority of the then creating Eleventh Regiment in Suwŏn.

However, the constabulary force could not put down the rebellion. The communist guerrillas received considerable support not only from the local civilians but from the locally recruited constabularymen and the leftist infiltrators as well.\textsuperscript{51} Not only were there continuous information leaks but also defections to the guerrillas. On June 18, 1948, the leftist cell in the Eleventh Regiment even assassinated the regiment commander Colonel Pak Ch'in-kyŏng.\textsuperscript{52}

While the anti-guerrilla operations were continuing in Cheju-do, the Republic of Korea was established on August 15, 1948. And the new Republic planned to reinforce the government troops in Cheju-do. The Fourteenth Regiment in Yŏsu, a southern seaport, was ordered to dispatch a battalion. But this arrangement instigated the biggest rebellion at the time.

On October 19, 1948, as the battalion was about to embark, the leftist soldiers mutinied. At first about forty mutineers, led by Sergeant Major Chi Ch'ang-su, killed about twenty officers and gathered some four hundred sympathizers through threats and false propaganda.\textsuperscript{53} The rebel

\textsuperscript{51} The leftist influence was so strong in Cheju-do that the leftist candidates could monopolize all of the two seats allocated for the island when the Korean Interim Legislative Assembly election was held in November 1946. See SCAP, Summation, No. 14 (November 1946), p. 18.

\textsuperscript{52} Chang, Yuksa chŏrŏpsaeng, pp. 123-124; Han, Ch'ang-gun, p. 203.
force grew about three thousand as leftist youths and students joined it. They occupied the city of Yŏsu and staged a large scale of massacre against government employees and rightists through the so-called people's courts. More than four hundred people were killed at the scene.

On October 20, the rebel force of about two thousand moved up to Sunch'ŏn, twenty miles to the north from Yŏsu, and occupied the city. The rebels organized a huge "victory parade" and also staged another massive slaughter against policemen and rightists.54 Kim Chi-hoe, a lieutenant and the Third Class graduate of the OTS, led the rebels in Sunch'ŏn. The revolutionary movement spread quickly over the nearby towns such as Kwangyang, Posŏng, and Pŏlkyo. People's committees were established and the flag of North Korean regime fluttered over the occupied towns.

53 Chi Ch'ang-su reportedly addressed that "the North Korean People's Army are marching down victoriously, and we should join the liberation army." See Chang, ibid., p. 163. There was another kind of false abetment that they had been assigned to quell a large scale police revolt. See Stars and Stripes, 24 October 1948, p. 2. For more details on the rebellions, see Chang, ibid., pp. 160-179; Han, Ch'ang-gun, pp. 203-204; Yi Ung-jun, Autobiography, pp. 259-261; Merrill, "Internal Warfare in Korea," pp. 143-144; John J. Muccio to Marshall, 26 October 1949, FRUS, 1948, VIII, pp. 1317-1318; Stars and Stripes, 21-31 October 1948; and Staff Conference, 26, 29 October 1948, RG 332, Box 28.

54 According to an American witness Lieutenant Stewart Greenbaum, an advisor to the Fourteenth Regiment, five hundred civilians and one hundred policemen were killed. See Stars and Stripes, 27 October 1948, p. 2.
The ROK Army immediately staged the counter attacks. The government troops recaptured Sunch'ŏn and Yŏsu on 23rd and 28th of October respectively. While Yŏsu-Sunch'ŏn Rebellion was put down in a week, however, the defeated rebels fled to the Chiri-san [Chiri Mountains] and carried on protracted guerrilla warfare until September 1953. The rebellion caused heavy casualties. About twelve hundred civilians and pro-government forces were killed, as against fifteen hundred rebels and their supporters. More than fourteen hundred houses were destroyed.

A noteworthy fact in the suppression operation was that the Manchukuo army veterans were the mainstays in the government force. The task force commander was Song Ho-sŏng, a Kwangbok Army veteran, but he was no more than a nominal leader. The main force of the task force comprised of Wŏn Yong-dŏk's Second Brigade and Kim Paek-il's Fifth Brigade, and both colonels were Manchukuo army veterans. The chief of staff of the task force was another Manchukuo army vet-

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55 The main force of the original Chiri-san guerrillas was cleared by the end of 1949. But in September-October 1950, the remnants of the defeated North Korean Army at the Naktong River Line retreated to the Chiri-san and relented another guerrilla warfare.

56 Merrill, "Internal Warfare in Korea," p. 144; Chang, Yuksa chorŏpsaeng, p. 161. The ROK government announced the casualties as 2,553 killed, more than 1,500 wounded, and 833 still missing. See Stars and Stripes, 25 November 1948, p. 2.

57 Chang, ibid., p. 161. Air observers reported one-fourth of Yŏsu of 90,000 population had been destroyed by fire. Stars and Stripes, 29 October 1948, p. 1.
eran, Lt. Colonel Paek Sŏn-yŏp. Furthermore, Wŏn Yong-dŏk let majors Song Sŏk-ha and Paek In-yŏp command his two regiments respectively, in behalf of the original commanders. Song was a Manchukuo army veterans, and Paek was Paek Sŏn-yŏp's younger brother. One major reason of those dispositions seemed to be that the Manchukuo army officers were originally trained in counterinsurgency operations so that they were supposed to be fit for quelling the rebels. The other reason might be that the key officers could not but use the credible persons, based on their former origins, since the communist infiltrations into the army were so severe that the suppression units which had been sent to repel the insurrectionists occasionally joined them instead. For instance, the two companies of the Fourteenth Regiment that stationed in Sunch'ŏn under the command of Lieutenant Hong Sun-sŏk joined the rebel force, when they were ordered to suppress the mutineers. Hong was another communist cell leader since his OTS candidate period in the Third Class.

Manchukuo army veterans continued to dominate the commanding posts during the protracted counter-guerrilla operations following the Yŏsu-Sunoh'ŏn Rebellion. Brigadier Generals Wŏn Yong-dŏk and Chŏng Il-gwŏn commanded the Honam

58 Interview with General Paek Sŏn-yŏp (8 July 1977); Chang, Yuksa chorŏpsaeng, p. 169.

59 For Hong’s mutiny, see Chang, ibid., pp. 165, 167.
District [Southwest District] Command and the Chiri-san District Command respectively throughout the year of 1949. Through the counterinsurgency operations the new Army’s elites, formerly the Japanese army or Manchukuo army veterans, began to change gradually their image from pro-Japanese collaborators to the “guardians of the people” from the intimidation of Communists. Rebels’ ruthless massacres during the Yōsu-Sunch’ŏn Rebellion and reckless lootings in their protracted guerrilla warfare significantly helped the Army leadership consolidate its cohesion and legitimacy among people’s minds.

Furthermore, the Rhee administration and the Army leadership began a large scale anti-Communist campaign together with the wholesale arrests right after the Yōsu-Sunch’ŏn Rebellion. In early November 1948, police arrested more than seven hundred people. They included not only leftists but also many nationalists and rightists as well. Among those arrested were Yŏ Un-hong, younger brother of assassinated Yŏ Un-hyŏng and also a well-known moderate socialist, and Ōm Hang-sŏp, a prominent nationalist leader from the KPG and right hand man of Kim Koo.61

60 Interview with General Chŏng Il-gwŏn (22 June 1977): Chang, ibid., p. 177. During this period, in contrast, the Japanese Military Academy graduates dominated the Army Headquarters positions including the Chief of Staff.

61 Stars and Stripes, 7 November 1948, p. 1. This shows that President Rhee took advantage of the Yōsu-Sunch’ŏn Rebellion to remove his political opponents.
The purge in the Army was even more dramatic and massive. The Army Headquarters deactivated the Fourteenth Regiment for the last time on October 28, 1948. Some fifteen hundred rebels were tried during November 1948. At Sunch’ŏn only, seventy-eight were sentenced to death in a month.

During the month of November, another army mutiny broke out in the Sixth Regiment at Taegu, another leftist stronghold. Afraid of the investigation and purge against them, the communist cell and its affiliates of about 150 men headed by a sergeant major Yi Chong-taek revolted on November 2. After killing several officers they fled to P’algong-san [P’algong Mountains] and staged a guerrilla warfare.

The political and military leadership now decided to expand the inspection and purge over the entire Army units. On December 1, 1948, the National Assembly passed the National Security Act for the grounding of the so-called "Sukkun" [A Cleanup of the Army]. The grand purge throughout the Army units began at first under the arrangement of

62 Chang, Yuksa chorŏpsaeng, p. 180; Stars and Stripes, 9 November 1948, p. 2.

63 Chang, ibid., p. 211; Stars and Stripes, 2 December 1948, p. 2.

64 For more details on the Taegu Rebellion, see, Chang, ibid., pp. 208-211; Han, Ch’ang-gun, p. 204; Yi Ung-jun, Autobiography, pp. 261-263; Stars and Stripes, 5 November 1948, p. 2.
Colonel Paek Sŏn-yŏp, G-2 of the Army Headquarters. On January 2, 1949, he formed a special section for inspection and operated fifteen branches nationally. Later on October 21, 1949, it became the Counter-Intelligence Corps (CIC), the powerful and independent organization which managed the grand purge from 1948 to 1954.  

There are no direct records or sources available on the grand purge such as court records and the list of purged officers and men were purged even before the War, including some five hundred death penalties. (The number of purges—those who were sentenced to death, imprisoned, and discharged—reached almost ten percent of the then army strength.)  

Therefore, one can easily imagine that there was a lot of misconduct and excessiveness in the purging procedure, explicitly and implicitly. A number of officers were purged by unconfirmed and slanderous charges against them, in some cases for the factional or rivalrous reasons.

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65 Han, Ch’ang-gun, p. 205; Chang, Yuksa chorŏpsaeng, p. 218; interview with General Paek Sŏn-yŏp (8 July 1977).

66 Han’guk chŏnjaeng-sa, p. 494; Han, Ch’ang-gun, p. 219; Sawyer, Military Advisors in Korea, p. 40. President Park Chung Hee was discharged from the Army during this time, but called back to the active duty during the Korean War.

67 Han’guk chŏnjaeng-sa, pp. 495-498; Chang, Yuksa chorŏpsaeng, pp. 219-221; Yi Ung-jun, Autobiography, p. 269.
In the meantime, on May 4, 1949, two frontier battalions of the Sixth Brigade defected to North Korea. Majors P’yo Mu-wŏn and Kang Tae-mu led their battalions with false operation plans of field exercise to cross the 38th parallel at Hwach’ŏn and Inje respectively, and surrendered to the North Korean Army. The Second Class graduates of the OTS, P’yo and Kang feared the imminent purges against them as their former regimental commander and communist indoctrinator Ch’oe Nam-kŭn was arrested in the preceding month. In both cases, about a half of soldiers resisted to surrender and escaped to the South. Interestingly enough, each group of escapees was led by anti-Communist company commander who graduated from the Fifth and Seventh Class of the OTS respectively, two distinguished anti-Communist "power sources" of the ROK Army officer corps.68

In retrospect, the chain of rebellions and mutinies prompted to uproot the communist cells in the ROK Army. As the mutinies broke out, especially in Yŏsu-Sunch’ŏn and Taegu, the incidents threw light upon the whole picture of the communist infiltrations into the Army. Thus, the army leadership could solidify the anti-Communist political ori-

According to Chang, there was the so-called "Kim Ch’ang-yŏng List," a mysterious and arbitrary blacklist of suspects, by which Kim, the strong man of the CIC, managed the purge at his will.

68 For more details on the Kang-P’yo Defection, see Han’guk chŏnjaeng-se, pp. 415-423; Chang, ibid., pp. 94, 221-222; and Yi Ung-jun, Autobiography, pp. 271-272.
etration of the Army through the counterguerrilla operations and the purges of dissident soldiers. And the purges also expedited the purification of the Army in its by-product, the defection of the Communist soldiers. Even though the rebellions and defections severely threatened the fate of the new-born Republic, and even though the heart-rending purges also shook the infant root of the Army, it was very fortunate for the ROK government to face those trials before the Korean War. Had the Communist soldiers concealed themselves in the Army and revolted together with their civilian sympathizers in the rear at the time of North Korea’s invasion, the ROK Army might have been collapsed before the United States and other United Nations forces arrived.
CHAPTER VII
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Seeing it from the perspective of history, the emergence and development of the ROK Army officer corps might be a mirror of its mother society of the time. The "five year history of liberation" of the Korean society during 1945-1950 period could be understood through this mirror of military affair, since the period was the era in which two antagonistic powers were formulated and rushed into a mutually disastrous clash eventually. The severe ideological disruption between Communism and anti-Communism among themselves typically characterized the Korean society of the period. The two Koreas built up their military forces, their ideological spearheads, along their political ideology.

At first, however, the bipolarization of the Korean peninsula was not initiated by Koreans themselves but by the two superpowers. As the Cold War touched down on Korean soil in the form of the divided occupations by the superpowers, the Korean people in both occupied zones came to gather around their ideological masters as if the iron
nails were dragged into a nearby magnetic pole. In this sense D.C. Watt was correct when he discussed on the origins of the Cold War in Europe, arguing that "both of the superpowers are ideological constructs, making claims on the loyalties of humanity far outside the bases of national citizenship to which individual loyalty was owed in the classic European system of international politics." ¹

In the meantime, as the mutually suspicious superpowers were hardening their spheres of influence in their own occupation zones, certain indigenous political groups in the North and the South took advantage of the Cold War situation for the purpose of dominating political powers in their zones. Thus, they accelerated ideological bipolarization.

This study has tried to examine the formation and political socialization of the ROK Army officer corps along the line of the major themes as mentioned above. In other words, the ROK Army officer corps became the bulwark of anti-Communism as the results not only of the American policy which sought for building a pro-American and anti-Communist native power to stem the Soviet expansion in Korea, but also of South Korean political and military leadership's active efforts to achieve their cohesion and legitimacy vis-à-vis the North Korea.

First of all, the United States wanted to prevent the
Soviet Union from dominating the entire Korean peninsula.
The concept of a multilateral trusteeship for Korea after
defeating Japan was the expression of those desires of the
Americans. As the World War II was nearing to the end and
the mutual suspicion was growing, the Truman administration
transferred to the policy of American occupation of Korea
as the surer means to prevent the Soviet domination, at
least for the surer voice in trusteeship arrangement. The
division of the Korean peninsula, in this sense, was not
the result of an accidental or "impromptu" decision but of
the careful political calculation before the end of the
Pacific War.

After the occupation system was established in South
Korea the Washington authorities still looked for a multi-
lateral trusteeship as the reasonable way of containing the
Russians without irritating them. But the occupation
authorities at Seoul, in the meantime, faced an unexpected
strong challenge from the well established leftist move-
ments. There was already a de facto leftist government, the
Korean People's Republic, in South Korea before the Ameri-
can troops arrived. To prevent a leftist-instigated revolu-
tion in South Korea, the American military government
actively engaged itself into a "containment at the scene"
--negating the Korean People's Republic, suppressing the
leftist movements, and building up rightist strength.
Moreover, the occupation authorities established a Korean constabulary to quell the leftist violences in the short run, and to prepare the ground for a future Korean national defense system in the long run. In this process, the occupation authorities favored those who had Japanese military background, either from the Japanese army or from the Manchukuo army. Those veterans with Japanese military background were usually anti-Communists. Even though they served in the Japanese or the Manchukuc army, furthermore, they did not have any special reasons to hate the Americans who liberated their mother country from the Japanese colonial rule. Since they already received basic professional military education, they could be changed swiftly into the pro-American and anti-Communist military cadres, with a minimum indoctrination and remedial education along the American military doctrine. In actuality, the English Language School which produced the first group of Korean army officers was established even before the constabulary force mobilized. This reveals occupation authorities’ emphasis on the political socialization of the future Korean army cadres.

However, some nationalist critics of the time, especially the Korean Provisional Government or the Kwangbok Army leaders, argued that the nucleus of the army lacked the legitimacy of "Ae’guk ae’jok" [Loyalty to the Country and
People], in the light of their past military careers.¹ In other words, it meant that there was no ethical core of cohesion in the Korean army. In fact, the occupation authorities' favoritism for former colonial bureaucrats, including the military officers, hampered the chance to rehabilitate the legitimacy and self-esteem of the nation and the people of Korea, which was of prime importance to the Koreans at the time of liberation.²

But the problems of legitimacy and cohesion would soon be solved in a new dimension by the Korean political and military elites themselves. The deepened Cold War situation in the Korean peninsula greatly helped their efforts of image making as a shield against Communism.

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² For instance, Sin Ik-hŭi, a prominent KPG leader, denounced overall coalition between the military government and pro-Japanese Korean bureaucrats in his private memorandum: "We will have to discharge all officials appointed by the interpreters of Military Government. After August 1945 all pro-Japanese and national traitors under the Japanese first went into hiding...and later came out to buy off the interpreters so that they would get positions in the provisional governments, the district governments, and the police. We must clean out all these people, and at the same time stop this spirit of dependence on foreign countries." "HUSAPIK" Vol. II, ch. 2, pp. 136-137.

³ Even after the establishment of the Republic of Korea, there were virtually no punishments against collaborators. This was in contrast to the French experience, where the Nazi collaborators were forced to march through the streets with their heads shaved. In Korea, the collaborators who consolidated their status as power elites under the blessing of the American military government could escape such punishments because they were as powerful as ever even in the Rhee regime.
Since mid-1947, the Washington authorities gave up the trusteeship idea due to the uncompromising impasse at the Soviet-American Joint Commission. They transferred to the policy of "backdoor containment" in Korea, characterized by the facts such as the establishment of a separate South Korean government under the international sanction, disengagement of the direct American military commitment, and limited economic and military aids to the South Korea.

Dr. Syngman Rhee ascended through the anti-trusteeship vortex to the ultimate political power of the separate southern government. After he grabbed political power, President Rhee artfully controlled the military, the ultimate power source in the new Republic. He tried to build a firm civil control pattern not by law, but by the sophisticated "checks and balances" between the military factions and the personal loyalty to himself. To build a strong ideological cohesion in the Army, Rhee heavily favored strong anti-Communist generals, especially those who had northern provincial origins and the Manchukuo military background. This expedited the ROK army officer corps’ swing to the right.

Meanwhile, the army leaders were very active to adopt the anti-Communist ideology as the new ethical base for their cohesion and legitimacy. They did that not only to cope with the political demands from Rhee, but also to
change their image from the pro-Japanese collaborators to
the new Republic's shield against Communist threats. The
Leftist rebellions and mutinies in 1948-1949 period gave
the army leaders the decisive momentum to legitimize their
status. They could solidify the anti-Communist political
orientation of the ROK Army through the counterinsurgency
operations and the purges of the dissident soldiers.

Finally, the army officers were given a sort of profes-
sional legitimacy through the education of the Officer
Training School that they would become the cadres of the
Korean national defense force. In actuality at the OTS,
they learned the new professional values and goals as Kore-
an army officers. Simultaneously, they came to have a base
of professional cohesion such as common doctrine, outlook,
pride, and congenial spirit through the OTS training and
the harsh barracks life there.

In retrospect, the Korean War confirmed dramatically the
importance of the new legitimacy of the ROK Army officer
corps. It was they who led the nation's defensive forces
against the Communist invasion in 1950. The Republic of
Korea could not have survived in the war of 1950 without
them. In this sense, the ROK Army officer corps did come up
to the expectations of the quest for a bulwark of anti-
Communism since 1945.
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A. Personal papers

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Frank H. Britton Papers.
Lawrence J. Lincoln Papers.

B. List of Interviewees (Alphabetical Order)

Following interviews were held at each interviewee’s office or home between April 1976 and September 1977.

An Chun-saeng,               Chang Ch'ang-guk,               Chang Ho-gang,
Ch'ong Il-gwón,              Ch'ong Nae-hyôk,              Han Sun-hwa,
Kang Mun-bong,               Kang Yong-hun,                 Kim Chôm-kôn,
Kim Chong-myôn,              Kim Hak-wôn,                  Kim Hong-gyu,
Kim Hong-il,                 Kim Ik-kwôn,                 Kim Sôk-wôn,
Kim Yong-sôn,                Nam Sang-sôn,                Paek sôn-yôp,
Pak Ch'ang-am,               Pak Chung-yun,                Ryu Kûn-ch'ang,
Yi Ch'ang-jông,              Yi Ch'i-ôp,                   Yi Hyông-kûn,
Yi Ung-jun.

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