

9 Sept 45

A MESSAGE TO THE PEOPLE OF SOUTHERN KOREA
FROM THE COMMANDING GENERAL
UNITED STATES ARMY FORCES IN KOREA

On behalf of General MacArthur, Commander in Chief of Army Forces in the Pacific and Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, I have accepted the surrender of Japanese Armed Forces in the southern provinces of Korea.

As Commanding General of United States Army Forces in Korea I am here to enforce the terms of that surrender.

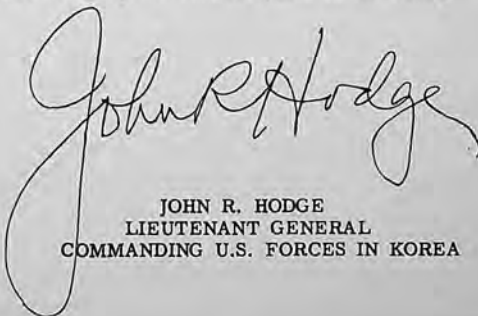
I am here likewise to maintain law and order, to enhance your economy, to protect your persons and property, and to perform all the other obligations imposed on an occupying force under international law. You, the inhabitants of areas under my control, likewise have obligations. You must strictly obey the directives of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers and all ordinances and orders I shall issue under his direction. You must preserve the peace, and otherwise conduct yourselves as honest and upright men. Do this and you need not fear. Violate my orders, harm my soldiers, or create disturbances and I shall be impelled to take appropriate action.

In order to apply the terms of surrender which have been signed, it will be necessary for me at first to operate through the machinery of the present government. I shall expect you to obey its officials who henceforth are under my orders.

Policies of the government will be changed for your benefit just as rapidly as necessary arrangements can be made. Racial discrimination before the law, in trade, industry, and in the schools will be ended. Freedom of religion, in speech and in thought will be yours. The press and radio will henceforth operate for the interests of the Korean people.

I know that you the Korean people have an ancient and honorable history. I know too, of the oppressions under which you have labored in past years. I know something of your aspirations, your longings and your desire for early improvement in your living conditions.

As to these, I counsel you to have patience. You have endured difficult years, but the problems those years have created cannot all be solved in a few days. By your conduct in the months ahead, you can demonstrate to the democratic nations of the world and to me as their representative your capacities and abilities as a people and your readiness to accept an honored place in the family of nations.



JOHN R. HODGE
LIEUTENANT GENERAL
COMMANDING U.S. FORCES IN KOREA

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