

## 1948. 03. 12. 도지사 경찰청장 합동회의를 앞두고 발표한 하지 중장의 성명서\*

STATEMENT MADE BY LT. GEN. JOHN R. HODGE BEFORE COMBINED MEETING OF PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS AND POLICE CHIEFS AT SEOUL, 12 MARCH 1948.

I will not dwell upon the importance to your nation of the next few months of its history. The coming events of general elections to be followed by formation of a national government will set up a most critical period. The responsibility for the success or failure of the holding of elections where all adults may freely express their choice of representatives to form their government rests upon Korean leaders and Governmental officials as well as upon all of the Korean people.

Responsibilities accruing to you gentlemen in this phase of your nation's progress may be listed briefly as follows:

1. Give all assistance to the election-educational program to see that all the people throughout your area are informed of the details concerning general election and the regulations that govern it.

2. Insure by every possible means that a free atmosphere exists for holding the general election, both before and during the election.

3. Insure that all physical arrangements for the election that come within your scope are completed on time.

4. Encourage and lead all Koreans to vote in the election.

The principal item I wish to impress upon you is the absolute necessity for a free atmosphere for elections. This one feature is of more concern to the United Nations General Assembly and to the United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea than any other. Unless there are free elections we have gained nothing, because without free voting we will not have the will of the people expressed. Democratic processes depend entirely upon the full and free expression by the people at the polls to gain their representation in government. The primary duty of the UN Commission here is to observe the elections for the express

Inclosure No. 76

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purpose of determining if the representatives elected do in fact represent the will of the people. The UN Resolutions make this clear, and the spokesmen of the Commission have reiterated that feature. We cannot expect the UN Commission to approve any elections that do not produce true representatives of the Korean people.

To insure our mutual understanding let me briefly enumerate the principal factors involved in free elections. There will soon be published some regulations designed to insure these freedoms. The free atmosphere we speak of must include:

1. Freedom of speech. This means individuals must be free to discuss in an orderly manner issues at stake and discuss the qualifications of candidates both publicly and privately without interference or pressure from officials or groups. This freedom includes the use of all types of campaign handbills and wall posters, providing they are not inflammatory to the extent of inciting disorders or overthrow of government.

2. Freedom of the press in the same manner as free speech.

3. Freedom of assembly. Orderly assemblies and meetings indoors and outdoors must be encouraged, regardless of the political beliefs or followings of the participants. Leaders calling such meetings must of course be responsible that they are orderly.

4. Freedom for candidates to campaign for election, regardless of their political beliefs. This means that candidates must be allowed free movement to campaign without any direct or indirect interference or pressure from officials, and must be given the same protection given to all other political or non-political citizens.

5. Law and order must be maintained, but in so doing, all measures smacking of oppression or suppression because of political beliefs must be avoided. No Korean man or woman can be arrested merely for a political belief. On the other hand, political hoodlumism and terrorism cannot and will not be condoned if we

Inclosure No. 76

are to keep a free atmosphere. Good judgment in maintaining this balance must be exercised.

In maintaining the required free atmosphere it is absolutely necessary to enlist the understanding and help of all the people in your areas. I have great respect for and great faith in the good judgment of the Korean people when they really understand the issues at stake. I believe that if all of you exercise real leadership and spread understanding among the people, my task, your task and the task of the UN Commission will be greatly simplified.

In closing, I wish to say that I have full confidence in you gentlemen, who represent government and law and order in your areas, and I express my complete belief that you will rise to meet the challenge offered by this chance for great progress, and will team up and cooperate both among yourselves and with the people in the provinces to make the first democratic general election in Korea a complete success, thus gaining a well deserved world wide approval and support.

Inclosure No. 76

- 3 -

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