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AMERICAN MISSION IN KOREA  
Seoul

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Subject: Report on the Internal Insurrections After April, 1948, made by Minister of National Defense, Lee Hun Suk

PART I. Introduction

I want to submit to you a report of the insurrections which have risen in various places in South Korea since April 3, 1948, in the following order:

1. Cheju Island incident;
2. Ho Nam incident;
3. Taegu incident;
4. Kang Won Province incident.

PART II. The Cheju Island Incident

1. History

a. Reasons

- (a) Because it is an isolated island, the propaganda and plots of the so-called People's Republic which sprang up right after liberation are still in existence.
- (b) More than 100,000 Cheju laborers in Japan are persistent followers of Communist ideas.
- (c) All feelings of the islanders toward the administrative organizations - the Cheju islanders are extremely parochial-minded and they hate policemen from other provinces.
- (d) Plots and underground activities of the South and North Korea Labor Parties.

b. Developments

Since the outbreak of the insurrection on Cheju Island on the 3rd of April, armed insurgents have, under the control of the Leftists, perpetrated all kinds of cruelties all over the island, such as murder, incendiarism, assaults on Government and public organizations, and robbery. The National Army appealed to the patriotic conscience of the rioters and patiently advised them several times to reflect on themselves and to submit, but not only did they pay no attention to our advice but on the contrary, they increased their atrocities.

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Considering the spreading influence of the serious conditions all over South Korea, we had to take up arms to reprimand them on the 17th of the same month. They are using the natural advantages of Halla Mountain for their guerrilla tactics and avoid head-on collisions. Most of the islanders are relatives of the insurgents and are cooperating with them, but due to appropriate measures taken by the able Commander of the Ninth Regiment we have promises of an early subjugation.

2. Disposition

a. Plan

We will appeal to their patriotic feelings first but in case they refuse to listen we are determined to exterminate them.

b. Disposition of troops

The Ninth Regiment of the National Army in Cheju Island has been suppressing the insurgents for the past nine months, since the middle of April, with 116 officers and 2,968 soldiers. The Tenth Regiment was organized there, but a part of this was replaced by others sometime in July of this year. The main force of the Regiment was transferred to Suwon, Kyonggi Province. The total result of the battles is listed in Table 1, attached. On the other hand, the Navy assigned ships for the transportation of soldiers and, since the 18th of October they have blockaded all sides of the island with seven ships and 203 sailors; they are contributing a great deal to the operations of the Army.

3. The Future

a. The Movement of the Enemy

What with the infliction of a crushing defeat on the enemy by the National Army and what with the lack of food, weapons, munitions, and collaborators on their part, the number of the armed rioters has decreased to 50 or 60, but it is a greatly regrettable matter that most of the islanders are spiritual supporters of the insurgents.

b. The forces of the Ninth Regiment have occupied all important points on the island and have removed all the people in the mountain villages to the seaside town for the enforcement of the "Bokap" (joint responsibility of community) system. They have cut all the trees and bushes

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along both sides of the roads on the island for the prevention of sudden attacks by the insurgents and have also cut off all the enemy's supply routes. The army is proceeding resolutely to rehabilitate Cheju Island by taking decisive measures against the collaborators of the rioters.

c. The Future

There has been a tendency for the insurgents, whose fate hangs by a single hair, to begin setting fires as their last resort, but because of the continuance of persistent military operations and martial law proclaimed on the 16th of November, conditions have rapidly begun to take a turn for the better. The Army and the Police have been united as one body.

We deem it highly necessary to lead the Islanders morally.

PART III. The Ho Nam Incident

1. History

a. Reasons

- (a) The cells of the South Korea Labor Party had been organized in Army units;
- (b) When they were ordered to Cheju Island, the Leftist cells in the Fourteenth Regiment received directives from the Party;
- (c) The Local Leftist Cells, Leftist Young People's Organizations and the Cells in schools had been joined to the Cells in the Regiment;
- (d) The arrest of Major Oh Doan Ki exposed the joint-plot of the extreme Rightists and Leftists.

b. Developments

The Fourteenth Regiment, in Yosu, which had been ordered to leave the subjugation of the Cheju rioters on the 19th of October received directives from the South Korea Labor Party, and three officers and about 10 privates rose in revolt despite the desperate attempts of their Battalion Commander to prevent them. They captured Yosu City completely at 8:00 A.M. on the 20th and organized the People's Army, composed of the local Leftist organizations and students.

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They arrived at Suncheon at 2:00 A.M. the same day and captured it. Towns like Hakdai, Posung, Polgyo-Ri, and Koheung were all under their influence, and they perpetrated all kinds of atrocities against God and man, such as murder, arson, destruction of police stations, robbery, assault of women, etc.

## 2. Disposition

### a. Plan

We wanted to siege the enemy in the Yosu and Suncheon Districts immediately, and exterminate them.

- b. Brigadier General Song Ho Sung who was appointed as Commander of the Ho Nam District ordered the Fourth Regiment at Kwangju to lay siege to Yosu from the West; a part of the Third Regiment of Chonju, in cooperation with a part of the Second Regiment of Taejon, from the North; a part of the Twelfth Regiment of Kusan to leave Kwangju for the northwest of Yosu; a part of the Fifth Regiment of Pusan from the sea outside of Yosu harbor; a part of the Sixth Regiment in Taegu to traverse the Chang Balk Mountains for the Northeast of Yosu; and a part of the Fifteenth Regiment at Masan to advance on the east of Yosu. At 6:00 P.M. on the 21st, the insurgents were everywhere under attack. The National Army occupied Hakdai and Suncheon and after three days of fierce battles and after several thousand houses had burned, they occupied Yosu. Towns like Polgyo-Ri, Posung, and Koheung have been completely rehabilitated. A part of the insurgents broke the siege and flew to Paegun and Chiri Mountains and are continuing their futile activities. The details are in the following Table II, attached. The Navy has engaged the enemy 22 times in blockading the Yosu harbor and in mopping up campaigns of the nearby islands, and is doing its best in patrolling the sea.

## 3. Prospects

### a. The Movement of the Enemy

A total of 826 insurgents have been shot down and 2,856 captured in the battles in this district and most of the weapons, clothes and food materials have been recovered. There are about 150 insurgents and rioters in the Chiri and Paegun Mountains and about 50 more in the vicinity of Posung. They are lingering in the jaws of death, suffering from hunger and cold.

### b. Condition of

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b. Condition of the Army

There are 110 officers and 1,732 soldiers engaged in the battles. They are doing their utmost to seize the Paegun and Chiri Mountains and the morale of the Army is excellent.

c. The Future

Because of the lack of ammunition and because of the suffering from the cold, the enemy has been demoralized and has no fighting spirit. We presume they will have to either surrender or be exterminated within about two months from now.

PART IV. The Taegu Incident

1. History

a. Reasons

- (a) Calls of the South Korea Labor Party had been organized in the regiment.
- (b) They were ordered to rise in revolt with the people in city on the 3rd of November, but it was discovered and prevented on the 2nd of November.

b. Development

At 11:20 A.M. on the 2nd of November, while Second Lieutenant Cho Jang Pil of the Military Police was taking some of the rebellious elements of the Regiment with him under arrest, he was shot down unawares by the ringleader of the rebels. The leaders tried to make the soldiers believe that the insurgents of Yosu had come to attack. They tried to mobilize the Regiment for a riot but they were suppressed by the great efforts of the Military Police and the assistance of the American Army. About 30 of them fled to Kuncheon and tried to persuade the Kuncheon unit to join them. They failed, however, and all but five of them surrendered. The Commander of the Unit, who was sympathetic to the insurgents, was arrested.

2. Disposition

Taegu was temporarily defended by the Military Police of the Sixth Regiment and, later on, parts of the Chunju and Pusan Regiments were dispatched for the suppression of the insurgents. The details are shown in Table III, attached.

3. The Future

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