WAR DEPARTMENT
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OPERATIONAL PRIORITY

From: Commander in Chief Army Forces, Advance
To: War Department

Mr.: CAX 52058

From CINCPAC ADV to WACOS into CINCPAC Manila
passed CAX 40028. Top Secret.

Following is a summary to include 17th September of
reports received in this headquarters from the Office of the
Commanding General XXIV Corps in Korea.

1. General. The general situation in southern Korea
at present is comparable to a powder keg ready to explode up-
ca application of a spark. The splitting of Korea into two
parts for occupation by Force of nations operating under
widely divergent policies and with no common demand in an
impossible situation. The occupation of Chosulpo and Seoul
proceeded without significant incident. Receiving orders from
Tokyo, Japanese in southern Korea have surrendered and appear
thus far as cooperative. However, where they are to the south
of United States Forces the Japanese are understood to be
looting and intimidating the Koreans, who hate the Japanese
with a bitterness unbelievable and would wreak dire vengeance
on all Japs, civilians and soldiers alike, were United States
Forces not present. Since surrender was announced on 15th
August, the Koreans have been on a prolonged holiday, not
showing any interest in normal pursuits.

2. Removal of Japanese officials. The problem of
Government for Korea will be complicated and difficult for
some period of time. Thirty years of a highly concentrated
administration completely dominated by the Japanese throughout
CM-TH-14676
(19 Sep 45)
From: Commander in Chief Army Forces Advance  
Tokyo Japan  

Mr: CAX 52628  18 September 1945

The important offices and Civil Service have left no Korean qualified personnel except in minor provincial and city jobs. Removal of the Governor-General, the Police Commissioner, Bureau Chiefs and some other high officials caused a favorable reaction among Koreans. However, wide scale removal of Japanese at this juncture with no acceptable Koreans and a limited Military Government personnel cannot be accomplished practically. Some Japanese will of necessity have to be retained as advisors for our direct Military Government.

3. Russian Activity. Based on reports of persons interviewed and eye witness accounts of result, the Russians have vandalized, pillaged and looted indiscriminately areas north of 36 degrees where they have visited.

Infrequent crossing below the 38 degrees have been made otherwise the line has been respected. Political agents have, left their thoughts throughout our area and political agitators have begun parades, demonstrations and other propoganda to disrupt our work and to discredit the United States before Koreans. The Russian Consul has been contacted at Keijo and a liaison party has been established at the Russian Headquarters at Keijo. The Soviet Consul-General, who had never left the territory to be ours, was invited to surrender ceremonies but he declined to attend although he called some few days later. Tactical liaison has been completely established between United States and Soviet Forces. Amicable but unproductive staff discussions of political and economic problems caused by separation of this closely.
From: Commander in Chief Army Forces Advance  
          Tokyo Japan 

Mr.  OAK 5058  18 September 1945

integrated country have taken place. It is believed that
instructions are awaited by Russian military authorities.

4. Political parties. The Koreans themselves have for
so long a time been down-trodden that they cannot now or in
the immediate future have a rational acceptance of this
situation and its responsibilities. There has been a mis-
conception also as to how immediate their independence is to
be and as to how quickly the Japs will be thrown out. Already
political parties with so-called leaders are being born in
emotion. Some are Communist and others support the Chungking
Provisional Government. G-2 is investigating many political
parties which have recently mushroomed. However, manifesta-
tions indicate the possible desirability of bringing in the
Provisional Government and such persons as Kim Koo and Syngmu
Hoe and others of his groups. Some older and more educated
Koreans despite being now suspected of collaboration are
conservatives and may develop into quite useful groups.

5. Personnel. The XXIV Corps is small in strength and
short of competent staff and Military Government personnel
which forces operations in limited areas and hence with little
overall effect. Necessity for expanding throughout all
Provinces in our area is urgent. The American troops have not
yet been required to fire a shot or to injure an inhabitant
and they have restored and maintained order wherever they
have gone; both facts are significant of their prestige.

6. Monetary matters. The Korean Monetary System has
been thoroughly sabotaged and it will be impossible to
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enforce the pegging of prices at the 15th August levels.

Threatened by bank runs, the Japanese have issued
several billions of yen of newly printed Bank of Korea
notes in the last few weeks resulting in the skyrocketing
of wages and prices and a thriving black market. United
States Forces have been ordered to refrain from all local
purchases without permit but only the introduction of a
complete new Monetary system can reestablish fiscal controls.

7. Foodstuffs. Although there is a fairly adequate
storehouse supply of foodstuffs, distribution and rationing
have broken down badly and successful reinstallation is not
likely. Disruption of railways and lack of motor transport
impairs movement of foodstuffs. All assistance is being given
in rehabilitating war-damaged transport, but railway situation
most serious with only ten days fuel supply available, south
Korean mines not producing and negotiations not concluded to
obtain coal from north Korean mines in Russian Zone.

8. Industries. Hundreds of thousands are unemployed
by collapse of war industries and strikes are threatened in
railways and public utilities. A general work holiday is
being staged by many. Identifying independence with freedom
from work despite propaganda euphoria to stay on job and re-
build for Koreans. A situation ripe for agitation has de-
volved. Agitation is further agravated by the lack of raw
material and the location of coal and primary power sources
in the Russian Zone.

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2. Demobilization. Nothing approaching stable conditions in Korea can be established until the Japanese Army and most of the Japanese population have been removed to Japan. Demobilization of the Japanese Army in Korea is absolutely impossible. It will have to be kept in forced bodies and removed to Japan beginning as soon as its disarmament is complete. It will be a source of irritation as long as in Korea. It cannot be controlled here unless taken over and put in guarded cages where we have to feed, house and care for them. Ferries are not operating from Pusan to Kyushu capable of transporting about 6,000 to 7,000 individuals per day. They are carrying Japanese to Japan and Koreans to Korea at about equal rate. It is believed that these should be continued since nationals of the two nations are piling up in the ports on each side of the channel trying to get home and the exchange does not affect the balance of individuals to be fed and housed but does reduce the capacity in each area for making trouble. However, it would greatly assist the occupation to transport the Japanese Army home at an early date, supervising this move at the port.

3. The news. The newspaper correspondents covering Korea as a group have behaved badly. They arrived by air after our landing, most of them from Japan with no knowledge of the local situation and without orientation took advantage of the American uniforms to run rampant over the area, committing acts of personal misbehavior that troops have been forbidden to do. There is reason to believe that by open sympathies with Korean radicals some of them have incited Korean group leaders to greater efforts at agitation for overthrow of everything and to have the Koreans take over.

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From: Commander in Chief Army Forces Advance
Tokyo Japan

To: CAT 32058

18 September 1945

All functions immediately. Before they got any glimpse of conditions as they existed, they were highly critical of all policies of the nation, of General Headquarters and of this headquarters relating to the occupation. This latter condition is now rectifying itself slowly as they begin to see the picture. One group arrived by air one afternoon, filed stories that evening and left the next morning, feeling that they knew all about the Korean occupation.

End.

ACTION: Gen Hull

INFO:
20/4
Gen Leahy
Gen Arnold
Gen Somervell
OFD (Far State Dept.)
Gen Blaisdell
Gen Wildsmith
Gen King
Gen Surles
Gen Richards
Mr McIlroy
C of S

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