August 27, 1971
Letter, UNCURK Principal Secretary Kuzbari to UN Chef de Cabinet Narasimhan

Citation:
“Letter, UNCURK Principal Secretary Kuzbari to UN Chef de Cabinet Narasimhan,” August 27, 1971, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, “International incidents and disputes - Korea - correspondence general (603.1),” Executive Office of the Secretary-General, S-0196-0005-02, United Nations Archives and Records Management Section (UN ARMS), New York, NY. Obtained for NKIDP by Charles Kraus. 
http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/117498

Summary:
In reaction to an incident on 24 August involving the mutiny of a number of 'military convicts,' ROK Air Force Chief of Staff and Minister of Defense have resigned, and the government agencies concerned with the maintenance of public security and order are being discredited.

Credits:
This document was made possible with support from the Leon Levy Foundation.

Original Language:
English

Contents:
- Scan of Original Document
Dear Mr. Narashiman,

The Republic of Korea was plunged into a political crisis this week as a result of an incident on 24 August involving the mutiny of a number of "military convicts" in Silmi Islet near Incheon Port.

Information regarding this incident was contradictory and confused: an early announcement by the counter-espionage HQ described the mutineers as North Korean armed agents; but it was subsequently found that this group apparently consisted of special recruits from Air Force personnel who were being trained on that islet for anti-insurgency activities.

Their sudden appearance at the outskirts of Seoul created panic and confusion and resulted in the blockading of the main highways leading to the capital as well as the closing of the Kimpo International Airport for a few hours. Earlier reports indicated that this group prevailed against their own instructors on the Silmi Islet, slaying all of them, took a boat and landed on Incheon Port west of Seoul, and were driving to the Capital in a commandeered bus; on the way they were intercepted and killed in the gun-battle which ensued with police and army units.

The incident led to the resignation of the Minister of Defence, Jung Nae Hui, who accepted full responsibility for the incident, as well as the ROK Air Force Chief of Staff, Gen. Kim Tu Man. The opposition party (NCP) demanded that the whole cabinet be held responsible and be replaced. The local press also has been vehement in its criticism of the government for the obvious break in the chain of command and its communications system and expressed doubts as to the credibility of the statements made by its official spokesmen. The National Assembly has formed a special investigative committee to enquire into the incident and it is expected that the issue will be debated upon when the Assembly reconvenes early in September.

The general view expressed here is that the incident reveals an obvious break in the chain of command and that it has discredited the government agencies concerned with the maintenance of public security and order. The ramifications of the above-mentioned incident are still to be felt soon.

With warm personal regards,

Sincerely yours,

Zouheir Kuzbari
Principal Secretary

Mr. C. V. Narashiman
Chef de Cabinet
United Nations
New York