

June 15, 1953 Letter, John W. Staggers to Syngman Rhee

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Summary:

John W. Staggers writes to Syngman Rhee about truce negotiations for the Korean War and issues he raised regarding Korean prisoners.

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JOHN W. STAGGERS
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WASHINGTON 1, D. C.

June 15, 1953

The Honorable, Dr. Syngman Rhee
President, Republic of Korea
Pusan, Korea

Dear Dr. Rhee:

I received your letter of May 5th, contents are carefully noted.

I have followed very carefully every move and counter move that has been made during the truce negotiations. The present status is not only shocking to me, but it has the same effect on every American citizen with whom I have discussed the situation.

Last week, I was called on by two Congressmen for my opinion as to what the real situation was in Korea. I was also asked, would President Rhee go along with the United Nations on the agreement which had been proposed. My answer to both questions was to the effect that, I doubted very much if you would change your position for the reason, that you were right, in the position which you had taken that Korea should be consulted on any agreement made affecting Korea and any agreement should meet with the approval of the Korean Government Officials.

I also called to their attention, the Korean prisoners from North Korea, were Koreans on Korean soil and that it was my candid opinion that Korea would resent sending soldiers from any other country, particularly Communist countries, to take charge of Korean prisoners on Korean soil.

I further stated that, in my judgement, the Korean Army should be permitted to take charge of all Northern Korean prisoners and if they wanted a liaison connection between the Korean Army and the United Nations, they could appoint a Committee of two or three individuals from the United Nations to contact those in charge of the prisoners and to report back to the United Nations.

The American people have awakened to the realization that in the past they have not received information upon which they could rely. They are now calling on the individuals who they believe are in a position to give them the facts. The Ambassador is doing a masterful job in giving them correct information.

There are many things that I would like to write you about, but I realize fully the terrible pressure you are under and I do not want to add to your burden.

With kind personal regards, I am

Very truly yours,


J. W. STAGGERS

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