

March 30, 1956

Letter from Choi Duk-shin to Dr. Syngman Rhee

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Summary:

Choi Duk Shin offers his opinion on the establishment of a Korean Legation in South Vietnam and discusses his personal desire to remain in the military service as opposed to the diplomatic corps.

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30 March 1956

Excellency:

I wish to express my great regret to fail for quite a long period to see Your Excellency due to various circumstances beyond my control, in spite of my anxious desire to see Your Excellency. Even on Your Excellency's Happy Birthday I could not congratulate Your Excellency as I was not on the list to be present before Your Excellency on the day.

With Your Excellency's kind permission, I take the liberty of producing the following paragraphs dealing with my personal matter.

I was informed by the Acting Minister of the Foreign Ministry that we are going to send our diplomatic envoy to the Republic of Vietnam very soon before the official appointment by the Vietnam Government of the diplomatic envoy to Korea. Such a delay by the Vietnam Government in appointing the Minister and taking necessary action, in spite of our sincere efforts to have taken all the preliminary procedures long time ago, could be due to their complicated situation including the general election. However, in the

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light of the protracted failure by the Vietnam Government to accelerate on the matter even after the general election was completed, I cannot help thinking that the failure has been from the inactive attitude on the part of the Vietnam Government.

In my personal opinion, it may be advisable to hold sending of our Minister to Vietnam until the Vietnam Government does the same to our Government. As for the necessary arrangement concerning the establishment of the Korean Legation in Vietnam, it may be proper to send in advance an official of our Foreign Ministry to Saigon. Furthermore, I recommend that such an inactiveness may better be rewarded by our renomination of the Korean Minister to Vietnam until the appointment by the Vietnam Government of the Vietnam Minister to Korea.

Please, Your Excellency, do not take my above recommendation as coming merely from my personal desire. However, I would like to ask Your Excellency's kind permission mentioning here my personal affairs. Being a career military man, I wish to remain as a military man serving for our country rather than to convert into a

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diplomatic life with which I am not familiar
nor well-trained.

With my deep sentiments of loyalty and
esteem, I remain

Respectfully,

Choi Duk-shin
Lt. Gen. ROKA
Commanding, I ROK Corps

His Excellency
Dr. Syngman Rhee
The President of the Republic of Korea
Seoul, Korea