25 May 1953

Conversation between GEN. CHOI AND GEN. HARRISON at the Intra-Delegation Meeting at 0945 hours 25 May 1953, subject; UNC new proposal of this date.

GEN. HARRISON: We have a new proposal today, Colonel Murray, will you read the statement for us?

(Colonel Murray reads the new proposal)

GEN. CHOI: General Harrison and Staff Officers. Although I had no time to study and I have no copy of my table, if I heard them correctly, I have noted four major concessions on the part of UNC in this new proposal. First is the withdrawal of the UNC position of releasing prisoners of Korean nationality at the date of the armistice becomes effective. In my letter to General Harrison dated on 13 May I said formally that the UNC position of 13 May on the Korean prisoners question is the minimum stand as ROKA.

Secondly, your new proposal says that you agree to the extention of time limit for explanations. In my letter to General Harrison I stated that the period of custody by the neutral nations shall not exceed 60 days. Thus you allow the enemy to have more time to practice their forcible repatriation.

Point three, you said and accepted that the unresolved POW question will be turned over to the political conference for settlement. How can the political conference settle this problem? I don't think it does. This is no more than a design to realize forcible indefinite detention and then to forcible repatriation.

Point four, majority vote, as I have stated in my letter of 12 May, the Chairman of the custodial commission will be the representative of Switzerland, and I said that the Poland and Czechoslavakia are pure Communist countries and the India is pro-Communist that means at least the three nations out of five are unquestionably communist side. Under such conditions would this majority vote system work fairly?

This is my brief comment at a first quick glance of the New Proposal which you are going to present to the Communists today despite the fact that I had no time to study and consult with my superiors. So, I have to inform this matter to my superiors. Here my letters read. (GEN. CHOI reads two letters, See attached letter of 12 and 13 May 1953 to Gen. Harrison)

So, I can not agree to this new proposal as the Delegate of ROKA and I believe, I certainly believe that our Government has not been consulted with your Government in contradictory with your repeated saying that your Government consults with the "allies".

GEN. HARRISON: General Choi, I fully sympathize and understand your position, and General Clark is going to see your President at 10:00 this morning to talk on this matter. And for everybody here, I tell you that nobody will talk on the phone these classified materials, be sure that. PIO will make no comment to the press, I am not going to see the press. You are not going up to the meeting today?

GEN. CHOI: I don't think I do.

GEN. HARRISON: It is entirely up to you, but it would not hurt anybody but the Republic of Korea.

GEN. CHOI (indignantly and furiously pounding his table with tears in his eyes) I did my best to explain to you our positions but now I am disillusioned. I am standing on the ROK side.

GEN. CHOI stood up to leave his table and so did everybody, then the intra-ddlegation meeting closed at 1015 hours.

At 1025 hours, Defense Minister Shinn called me on the phone told me to attend to the Panmunjom meeting by the instruction of the President. However, reminding myself of an old saying that "When the warrior is at battlefield, even King's orders are not acceptable", I said to Minister Shinn that I could not attend the meeting under such conditions and I would assume the responsibility arising therefrom.

At 1050 hours, that is 10 minutes before the meeting at Panmunjom General Harrison called me on phone and asked if I were coming up to the meeting, and I refused his offer to send me a hellicopter.

COMMENT

In analysis of the facts covered herein, it is apparent that the UN Command or possible the US Government prepared this new proposal in anticipation of the ROK opposition to this proposal, but just for the formality sake in view of the precedented tough attitude of ROKA Delegate on 12 May when UNC was ready to present counter-proposal without consultation of ROK side, purposely delayed regular 8 o'clock morning meeting up until 0945 and even Gen. Clark did not see the President until 10 o'clock being there in Seoul since one day before so as not to give us any time to obstruct the presentation of the proposal to the Communist at 11 o'clock.

DUK-SHIN CHOI
Maj.Gen. ROKA
Delegate