THE WHITE HOUSE

December 23, 1953.

Dear Mr. President:

Thank you for your letter of November 5, in which you referred to letters from Admiral Won-yil Sohn, Minister of Defense of the Republic of Korea, to the Secretary of Defense concerning augmentation of the Republic of Korea Army, Navy and Air Force.

Secretary Wilson has informed me that the recommendations outlined in Minister Sohn's letters have been referred to the Joint Chiefs of Staff for consideration in planning future assistance to the Republic of Korea military forces. As you know, I am personally interested in the development and increase in strength and capabilities of the Reblic of Korea armed forces. In this connection I am particularly interested in the Republic of Korea Army, and Secretary Wilson has energetically pursued a program intended to strengthen the Republic of Korea Forces to the extent such augmentation is feasible. For this reason the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Secretary of Defense recommended, and I approved, the development of a Republic of Korea Army of twenty divisions and a modest Republic of Korea Air Force and Navy.

I am sure you will agree that the many problems involved in maintaining complex Air Force and Navy equipment warrant careful consideration prior to action to develop such forces. I have asked Secretary Wilson to give careful consideration to the recommendations outlined in Minister Sohn's letters, and Minister Sohn will receive a message from Secretary Wilson in the near future.

Sincerely,

(signed)
Dwight D. Eisenhower

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

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