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THE KOREAN RESEARCH AND INFORMATION OFFICE

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Dear President and Mrs. Rhee:

This is a sober and in some sense a somber Christmas season.

I am sorry to hear of the resignation of Minister Cho. He is a man of fine spirit, who has served Korea and the Government as well as he could for many years. I hope that you are able to find a successor who can bear successfully the burdens that will be even heavier in the months ahead.

Between the deportation issue on the one hand and the determination for relaxation of tensions -- with proposals and counter-proposals -- on the other, this is surely a time to tread warily.

The possibility that Russia and China may drift apart in their policies is one consideration; and we may be sure that the United States will explore that possibility hopefully and will do anything it can to encourage it. This will probably mean an increased emphasis upon the "necessity" of a working accord of some kind with Russia, combined with a cautious but continuous diplomacy of opposition to Red China's aggressiveness.

The Communists, on the other hand, are doubtless seeking every advantage for themselves in this situation -- hoping that Russian "agreeableness" (without substance) combined with Red Chinese truculence will create situations in which we will make more concessions.

I cannot think of any better course for Korea than the one you have always followed -- of warm and friendly cooperation with the U. S. and the U. N., combined with steadiness in opposing concessions and in demanding the simple justice of Communist withdrawal from northern Korea. In terms of the great need for democratic unity in this situation, I am assuming that the United States will undertake more direct responsibility in attempting to further a solution of the Korean-Japanese problem. Let us hope that this may take the form of pressure upon Tokyo to back down from its deportation scheme. The dispatch of 5,000 free Koreans to the Communist north is in a real sense just as harrowing to America as to Korea. On the other hand, a solution of the Korean-Japanese impasse would be a real triumph for the entire free world. No doubt the new Ambassador in Seoul has instructions to do whatever he can to bring it about.

In the midst of these problems, it is too bad that this is an election year both in Korea and in the United States. We must all do our best to work for unity of spirit. We have special reason to be grateful for your leadership as we enter 1960.

Most cordially yours,

Robert T. Oliver

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