

Address By
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At The
Fund-Raising Appeal
American-Korean Foundation
Departmental Auditorium
Washington, D. C.

TUESDAY, July 12, 1955 - 12:50 PM (EDT)

Secretary Robertson,*
Secretary Burgess,** Ambassador Yang,***
Distinguished Guests, Ladies and
Gentlemen -

* Honorable Walter S. Robertson, Assistant Secretary of State for
Far Eastern Affairs, who will introduce General Taylor.

** Honorable Carter L. Burgess, Assistant Secretary of Defense (Manpower
and Personnel), Chairman of the meeting.

*** You Chan Yang, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea.

It is a privilege for me to speak before this distinguished audience on a subject close to my heart - the rehabilitation of the Republic of Korea.

Having had ample opportunity to observe at first hand the needs of Korea I am glad to have the opportunity of reporting on them to the friends of Korea in America.

No nation could be more deserving of such assistance as we can give.

The Korean people have made tremendous sacrifices in the common cause of freedom.

The price of resistance to Communist aggression was the destruction of cities, towns and even the countryside. The fighting in Korea took twice as many lives of nationals of the Republic of Korea as our own country gave in both World Wars and the Korean conflict combined.

Despite their loss and suffering, the spirit of the Korean people has not been broken.

Their soldiers are competent and brave. The civilians are hard working, tough minded and resourceful.

They are determined to stand on their own feet.

~~They have the will and the spirit to help themselves.~~

They and ~~their government~~ are seeking economic independence, not perpetual relief.

They are eager for assistance in preparing their own leaders and their own institutions to do what is necessary. They want to put an end to the need for outside help.

For the time being, however, outside help is necessary. Having no industry of their own they must import most of their manufactured requirements.

Having little domestic capital they must seek funds abroad to repair the damage to their cities and towns. They need to be helped now if they are to have the means and the training in the future to make the most of the energy and eagerness which are their prime assets.

On purely humanitarian grounds, therefore, our assistance to this brave people is fully justified. At the same time, there are numerous, valid reasons why the Republic of Korea should be helped on the grounds of self-interest.

From a military point of view the Republic of Korea is one of our strongest and most important allies. During the Korean war and since the Armistice this small country has made tremendous efforts to increase its military capability in order to be able to protect itself against the threat from the north.

Its Army now consists of 20 trained divisions ~~and~~ soon to be backed by 10 reserve divisions, a total force of some 660 thousand men.

Contrary to certain of our other allies this country does not ask to be allowed to reduce the burdens of its military establishment - it begs us to allow them to increase that burden - asks in exchange economic and military aid.

The presence of this strong force in being offsets in an important degree the large enemy force in North Korea and north of the Yalu.

The Chinese Communists are deprived of a considerable degree of freedom of action and movement by these forces deployed along the southern boundary of the demilitarized zone.

It is to our national interest to see that this military asset is not dissipated but remains as a stabilizing element in the military situation of the Far East.

Apart from military considerations, it is to our interest to support the rehabilitation of Korea because of its effect upon our relations with the nations of Asia.

We have made Korea our protege and ally and are largely responsible for its behavior and well being.

Our manner of discharging our obligations toward Korea is being carefully watched by neighboring countries who will evaluate our worth as a friend by our performance in Korea.

In this respect I am reminded of the analogy of Korea with West Berlin which also is the show window of Western democracy before a critical audience of observant neighbors.

Our international prestige is inextricably engaged in the success or failure of our programs in South Korea.

I think that there is cause for gratification in the fact that many independent volunteer agencies in the United States are sharing in the effort to assist in the rehabilitation of Korea.

Their activities are in harmony with those of such government organizations as the Foreign Operations Administration, the Armed Forces Assistance to Korea and the United Nations Korean Reconstruction Agency.

Among these volunteer agencies is the American-Korean Foundation, with which we are concerned here today.

It enjoys the highest regard in Korea and the United States.

It is a non-political, non-sectarian, non-profit organization which was established almost exactly three years ago.

Since it came into being, the American-Korean Foundation has spent more than three million dollars on carefully selected self-help projects.

Last summer, it shipped over eight million dollars worth of equipment and supplies collected in this country through a "Help Korea Trains" program.

Today, one of the many things the Foundation is doing is backing a 4-H Club operation in South Korea. This is especially important to the future of the republic, since South Korea is eighty percent agrarian. Through this program the American-Korean Foundation is making it possible for a hundred thousand young men and women in rural areas of South Korea to be trained in techniques which will improve agricultural methods and increase farm production. With added financial support from the American people, the Foundation can double the number of young people who are receiving 4-H guidance and instruction.

Another good example of the current projects under the sponsorship of the American-Korean Foundation is a modern building that is rising on the campus of Chung Ang University to give Korea its first up-to-date school of pharmacy and a school for the training of elementary teachers.

The Foundation's program for training leaders is particularly noteworthy.

Some 275 selected Korean college students are now studying in the United States under the auspices of the Foundation, preparing for positions of leadership in the recovery of their nation.

To select, coordinate and direct its projects, the American-Korean Foundation maintains a small, but able, staff in Korea.

Heading this group are people of exceptional stature in their respective fields.

The achievements of the Foundation have won the praise and endorsement of leading citizens of the United States.

President Eisenhower has stated that he attaches the greatest importance to the work of this organization, which he says is serving our national interest.

The Armed Services of the United States have generously supported the Foundation.

This should come as no surprise, since our fighting men stationed in Korea have always contributed liberally from their pay to relieve suffering and to rebuild schools, churches and hospitals. However, this great source of help for the Korean people is now diminishing with the withdrawal of ~~some~~ ^{many} of our military units from Korea.

Much of the good work they began needs to be completed.

Through the American-Korean Foundation, however, this work can be continued.

Although a heartening amount has been accomplished, there is a tremendous amount yet to be done.

As just one example I might mention the problem of providing care for helpless and homeless Korean children.

As a result of the war, there are 300,000 Korean orphans, ~~but~~ ^{where} existing orphanages are able to care for only 50,000 ~~orphaned~~ children.

Such facilities as exist urgently need repair and improvement, and no provision at all can be made for the care of five out of six of Korea's homeless children. They can find food only by begging. They have no place to sleep except such shelter as they can find among the ruins.

There are plenty of other statistics, all of them equally appalling.

Of the women widowed by the war, some 300,000 are existing under conditions of want and privation.

These women have little or no training in skills which would permit them to earn their livelihood.

There is urgent need for vocational training for this group.

I could go on listing needs in education, in health, and in welfare activities.

In all of them the story is similar. There are tremendous problems, but there is a tremendous eagerness by the Koreans to furnish the work and persistence to find solutions.

The American-Korean Foundation is one of the most important sources of the means with which they can put their eagerness and their energy to work in such a manner as to produce effective results.

It is through the American-Korean Foundation that all of us can have a share in helping the people of the Republic of Korea to rebuild their country.

The Foundation can do no more than you and other Americans make possible. Your generosity, manifested in your voluntary contributions, is its only source of the funds which are essential if this vital work is to continue.

Traditionally, Americans respond generously to worthy causes. It is a part of our heritage to rally to the assistance of people who are the victims of disaster.

From the earliest days of the frontier to the present time, the ^{support} record of the American people for humanitarian activity on behalf of others has ^{become} been an ~~outstanding one.~~ *a national tradition*

I think that the ~~facts~~ of the present ~~situation~~ speak ~~eloquently~~ for themselves.

*There is ample opportunity in Korea to extend
this tradition.*

~~But~~ As one who has seen at first hand the sufferings and the courageous determination of the people of the Republic of Korea, and who has seen the splendid work of the American-Korean Foundation, I can assure you that the work in which you are being given an opportunity to share is eminently worthwhile, as is the agency which directs this work - the American-Korean Foundation.

The pace for the nation-wide effort to obtain support for the American-Korean Foundation is being set here in Washington by the Foundation's "National Capital Committee," with Mrs. Robert L. Bacon as its chairman and Ralph Becker as vice chairman. Last year the District of Columbia, with its many military and civilian employees, gave more than fifty thousand dollars to the Foundation.

That is an impressive ^{at least} showing.
However, in the face of the need which
exists, still more is needed.
It is to be hoped that this year the
local showing will match last year's
accomplishment.

From such voluntary support, combined
with that of the people of the cities
and towns throughout our country and
the contributions of the personnel of
our military installations at home and
overseas, I am confident that the
American people will register another
outstanding achievement in their long
record of generosity.

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