

December 1954

Message, President Syngman Rhee to General Taylor and his forces

Citation:

"Message, President Syngman Rhee to General Taylor and his forces", December 1954, Wilson Center Digital Archive, B-013-051, Official Correspondences, President Rhee's Correspondences, Syngman Rhee Institute, Yonsei University.
<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/118646>

Summary:

In this Christmas Message, President Rhee addresses General Taylor and the US Forces. He praises the US troops for their victory against the communist aggression during the Korean War. Rhee recognizes America for continuing to "defend human liberty" not only in Korea but in all of Asia. Rhee ends the message with the goal of creating a "free, united, and democratic" Korea.

Credits:

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Original Language:

English

Contents:

Original Scan



PRESIDENT RHEE'S CHRISTMAS
MESSAGE, 1954

TO GENERAL MAXWELL D. TAYLOR AND ALL
FORCES UNDER HIS COMMAND

To all members of the United Nations Forces, military or civilian, I extend my warmest wishes for a blessed Christmas. I realize it can hardly be a merry one, for when vast distances separate husbands, fathers, sons and sweethearts from those who mean most to them on this earth, it is difficult to concentrate on Yuletide joys and the real reason for rejoicing. Home is a magic word. Here, where so many things are strange to the foreign born, home takes on added meaning. It stands for everything that is fine and good and desirable and sentimental. Yet the spirit of Christmas is a wonderful thing that fills men's hearts. Christmas is a time for rejoicing, for renewed hope and faith.

If you will, you can experience a sense of satisfaction over your presence in Korea at this time. You responded to a call to defend human liberty, to protect men, women and children and their homes from an aggressor. In answering the challenge to democracy you can take consolation. The united effort turned back the invaders who sought to subjugate the entire peninsula or drive us all into the sea. It is due to you that we are enjoying freedom in at least half of our country. Further, your presence here has kept the Communists from conquering the rest of the continent of Asia. You have prevented the front line from advancing closer to the California shores, closer to your own homes wherever they may be.

Whether the world recognizes your great achievements or not, you have indeed accomplished all this. You should be satisfied in your own conscience. It is only natural that you would like to feel that the great objectives of the United States and other countries represented here have been attained, that when you depart you will leave a free, united and



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democratic Korea. But if you see this goal still unachieved, you also are aware that we understand. We realize it is not due to your lack of willingness or ability, but because of decisions made by the United Nations policy makers which deprive you of the opportunity.

We are happy to remember those comrades of yours who already have gone home and hope they are enjoying reunions with their families now. We wish you happiness as you celebrate this occasion with us. I pray that God's richest blessings be yours at this Christmas time and throughout the coming year.