

February 28, 1955

Letter, Harold Lady to Syngman Rhee

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Summary:

Harold Lady warns of a possible fertilizer shortage and resulting food shortage.

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Memo No. 25

February 28, 1955

Dear President Rhee:

Subject: Danger of a Fertilizer Shortage

There is serious danger that the farmers will not receive sufficient fertilizer this spring to enable them to produce good crops.

The response to the recent call of the Office of Procurement for tenders indicates that, although offers of almost all the available fertilizer in the world were received, considerably less than the ideal amount can be bought for arrival in Korea before April 30.

It is believed that a food shortage can be averted only if all the fertilizer obtained is delivered to the farmers with the least possible delay. I am informed that this cannot be done unless drastic action of some type is taken to end the generally disorganized condition that now exists because of a number of complex reasons.

According to latest reports (February 10), 139,000 metric tons (6,500 freight car loads) of fertilizer is now on hand - 30,000 tons, mostly nitrogenous, lying in the ports and 109,000 tons (29,000 nitrogenous and 80,000 phosphatic) in provincial warehouses. This should be put into the hands of the farmers immediately to make way for future imports of fertilizer which must also be delivered to the farmers with efficiency and dispatch.

Harold Wendell Lady