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MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SERVICE
CAPTURED PERSONNEL & MATERIAL BRANCH

Date of Report: 24 April 1945.
Date of Interrogation: 11 April 1945.
Serial Nos and Rank: 41J-1150, Civilian, LEE, Bok Do
14J-185, Civilian, PAIK, Song Kum
41J-393, Civilian. KANG, Ki Nam

WME

By: Lt. Wilson

COMPOSITE REPORT ON THREE KOREAN NAVY CIVILIANS,
LIST NO. 78, DATED 28 MAR 45, RE "SPECIAL QUES-
TIONS ON KOREANS."

1538

PREAMBLE

The general anti-Japanese feeling of these Koreans is the same as almost all of some 100 Korean PsW questioned by the interrogator. It is probable that some Koreans are opportunists but these 3 appear to be very sincere in their statements which may be considered reliable. A separate report will be made on one PW; the other two are not worth further interrogation.

QUESTIONNAIRE

This report is based on "Interrogations of Koreans", List No. 78 of 28 Mar 45. Paragraph numbers correspond to question numbers in this list.

2. Koreans in Local Government:

a. The village headman is always a Korean. He is an elderly man elected by the villagers for his honesty and leadership. The Japanese make no attempt to control the election.

b. Offices held in Korean political divisions:

(a) "Myon" (township) most offices are held by Koreans. Two out of 10 may be Japanese.

(b) "Kun" (county) offices are usually held by Koreans. In Cholla Pukto (Zenra-hokudo) there are 14 "Kun", 9 of which, in 1942, were headed by Koreans, appointed by the Japanese Government (No details).

(c) "Up" (town) offices are held by both Japanese and Koreans depending on the predominance of the population.

(d) "Pu" (city) is always headed by a Japanese but other positions in the city may be held by Koreans.

The governors of "Do" (provinces) are predominantly Japanese. In 1942 the governors of Cholla Puk To (Zenra-hokudo), Chungchong Pukto (Chusei-hokudo), Kangwon Do (Kogendo), and Hwanghae Do (Kokaido) were Koreans, the others Japanese.

(e) Since

c. Since 1940 no change has been noted in the number of Koreans holding government positions.

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3. Korean men have been conscripted to work in Japan since 1942. They are notified by the Myun (township) office. 300 to 1,000 men would be conscripted and shipped to Japan at one time. It is not known how often these shipments took place. In one village of 93 houses 30 men were conscripted in two years time (1942-44). Though conscription is for a period of two years, it is believed that many are kept for 3 years or longer. One PW who lived in Japan had many personal contacts with Koreans working in coal and iron mines, and building airfields. They were always required to do the worst type of work such as was found in the deepest and hottest part of a mine.

Men working at the coal mines received ¥ 3.50 per day out of which ¥ 0.10 was put in postal savings. They were given food and quarters. There was no provision made for the care of families of conscripts. The men would send what money they could save to their homes. At the Chinnai, Karafuto, coal mines native and Japanese laborers earned ¥ 7.00 to ¥ 24.00 per day but conscripts were given fixed wages. Correspondence was permitted but all mail was censored.

The treatment of these Koreans is worse than that given Allied POWs. The prisoner who lived in Japan assisted 3 Koreans to escape from a coal mining camp near Yoshima, Fukushima Ken, at which 500 conscripts were working. One of these he took to Akira to work in a coal mine, but was apprehended through his letters to his family. He was taken back to Yoshima, tortured for 15 days and then imprisoned at Taira. The other two were never caught.

4. Koreans have not been allowed to migrate to North China, Manchuria, or Japan since 1942. One PW said that Koreans are conscripted to work in Manchuria, the other two said that no conscripts were sent to Manchuria.

5. Any one refusing to be conscripted is imprisoned and his family deprived of food.

6. Employees of plants producing war material must carry a pass bearing their photograph and signature.

7. Farmers are allotted 2 go, 5 shaku, and office workers 2 go, 4 shaku of rice per day. Before the harvesting of a crop it is inspected by a government official who estimates the yield and deducts the year's allotment for the farmer and family. The remainder must be sold to the government agent. If the crop is better than estimated, the farmer is lucky and will hide the extra rice but if it is below the estimated amount he must meet the requirement from his own allotment.

8. Koreans are very resentful because they believe that the Japanese farmers are not rationed. Although the farmers are half starved they still work just as hard. Due to little rain the 1942 rice crop in Cholla Pukto (Zenra-hokudo) was very poor. For the same reason the 1945 crop was only a little better. Since 1941 all crops have been below average because of the complete absence of commercial fertilizers. There has been no crop land left untended because of shortage of labor. Women and children do more farm work than they did before the war. Villagers all pitch in and help wherever needed.

In the southern provinces of Korea, the farmers are required to put one-half of the cultivated land, excluding rice plots, into cotton. Inspectors estimate the probable yield. This must be met by the farmer, borrowing from someone with a surplus if necessary.

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9. Peasants are not required to carry identification cards; (no information on other classes) however, a personal history of every individual is kept in the "Myon" office.

10. Two Pw, farmers, who left Korea in 1942 and 1944 respectively had not seen ration tickets of any type. (The other Pw lived in Japan from 1935). Request for purchase of clothing was made direct to the "Myon" office. Food was allotted out of their own crops.

11. In April 1944, a law was passed forbidding Koreans to travel over 100 km on any vehicle without a permit from the police. Pedestrians are not controlled. Citizens are subject to inspection by government officials in their homes at any time. Inspections are not made very often but when they are, full account must be made of every one in the household. In 1943 the home of one Pw was inspected twice for sanitary conditions. There is a curfew for everyone at 2400. Anyone found out of their homes after that will be arrested. Blackouts are enforced occasionally. Sirens within hearing distance of all villages are used for warning.

12. Pw from the vicinity of Chonju (Zenshu), Cholla Pulcto (Zenro Hokudo) in knew a number of men who were given military training under the so-called "Volunteer System" which was first set up in 1938.

From 1938 six and one-half months basic training was given at Kyungsung (Keijo) or Nanan (Nanan). Training was separate from Japanese but by Japanese NCOs. After the basic, volunteers were given 2 or 3 months furlough and then assigned to combat units. Koreans were always well dispersed among the Japanese troops. Ability to speak Japanese and at least 2 years education was required before being accepted for training.

13. Pre-conscription Japanese language training schools are set up in each "Myon" (township). Students would attend 3 or 4 hours every day for about 1 year.

14, 15. Pw left Korea before the conscription law went into effect; therefore, knew little about it. They have heard of Koreans who fled from this and labor conscription but could give no names. Natives of Northern Korea have more of a tendency to rebel against such laws than those in the south.

16. Pw knew of the "Tonari Gumi" but had not heard of such organizations in Korea.

17. The war has brought about no noticeable change in the percentage or position of Koreans working on railroads. Conductors, railroad engineers, or any other job with the exception of station master may be held by Koreans.

18. All Korean prostitutes that Pw have seen in the Pacific were volunteers or had been sold by their parents into prostitution. This is proper in the Korean way of thinking but direct conscription of women by the Japanese would be an outrage that the old and young alike would not tolerate. Men would rise up in a rage, killing Japanese no matter what consequence they might suffer.

19. Older Koreans who lived in the days of Korean independence invariably hate the Japanese. While some younger men who have attended Japanese schools are outwardly pro-Japanese; many of them are most outspoken in their feeling against the Japanese rule.

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20. All POW state that they were forcibly conscripted.

21. Although the Koreans dislike the effect that the war has had on them, many have hopes that it will eventually lead to their independence. Their attitude toward Japan is that of tolerance.

It is generally believed that Russia will get into the war against Japan. One prisoner is definitely pro-Russian and would like to see a communistic form of government in Korea.

China is considered a weak nation incapable of handling its own problems, much less those of Korea. Most Koreans look to America for their liberation.

22. Koreans in the Pacific Islands receive very cruel treatment from the Japanese. All prisoners knew of civilian laborers who were killed by Japanese soldiers for fear that they would give themselves up to the Allies. PW, captured on Tinian, saw 3 women, two with babies strapped on their backs, headed for the American lines. A lieutenant hiding in the same cave as PW killed them all for security reasons. PW felt certain that he would have been killed if it had been known that he was Korean.

23. Prisoners all heard, while in Hawaii, of United Nations pledge, that in due course there would be an "Independent Korea". It is not known whether this information has been received in Korea.

24. All prisoners were emphatic in their belief that all Koreans would jump at the chance to fight Japan. Those apparently loyal to Japan would quickly change their tune if it were once known that Japan was going to lose the war. Prisoners from southern Korea state that the southerners are more passive and would be less likely to take an active part in fighting the Japanese. Independence movements have usually originated from the more active, free-thinking people of the north. The three prisoners would welcome the opportunity to receive military training and then fight the Japanese. They feel that they would be best suited for guerrilla warfare.

25. There is no resentment against Koreans holding official positions. Individuals may be disliked but it is generally felt that as a whole they should retain their position in any future government of Korea.

26. One prisoner is of the opinion that all Japanese should be removed from Korea. "A Japanese is always a Japanese at heart" and in case of future troubles with Japan any remaining would be a detriment to Korea.

Other prisoners felt that only high officials should be removed. Koreans in Japan would counterbalance the Japanese in Korea.

27. Prisoners believe that Korea should be governed temporarily by United Nations representatives. This would be accepted by all Koreans. Straight American government would be acceptable to many but any other single nation would be met with opposition.

28. Village government would operate normally and without help if the country were under United Nations control. There are an average of 60 police in each kun, 50% of whom are Koreans. It is felt that this percentage could maintain satisfactory control over their country until a larger police force could be trained.

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29. Yo, Un Hyung (Lo, Un Kyo) (呂雲享), is known to be an active member of the Korean Independence Movement. He lived in Kyongsung (Keijo) in 1942. Other details could not be given.

30. One prisoner had heard of a Korean Communist Leader who worked in Japan in 1943. The only name known was Kim (Kanemoto).

COMPOSITE REPORT ON THOSE KOREAN NAVY CIVILIANS,
LIST NO. 70, DATED 26 MAR 45, RE SPECIAL QUERIES

1538

The general anti-Japanese feeling of these Koreans in the area is almost all or most 100 Korean. The question is the intensity. It is probable that some are opportunistic but those who are very sincere in their statements should be considered reliable. A composite report will be made on one PW; the others are not worth further investigation.

This report is based on "Interrogations of Koreans", List No. 70 of 26 Mar 45. The names in brackets correspond to question numbers in this list.

1. General in Local Government

a. The village headman is always a Korean. He is an elderly man elected by the villagers for his honesty and leadership. The Japanese make no attempt to control the election.

b. Offices held in Korean political divisions:

- (a) "Eun" (township) level offices are held by Koreans. Two out of 10 may be Japanese.
- (b) "Hui" (county) offices are usually held by Koreans. In Cholla Province (Cholla-do) there are 14 "Hui", 9 of which, in 1942, were headed by Koreans, appointed by the Japanese Government (No details).
- (c) "Mye" (town) offices are held by both Japanese and Koreans depending on the concentration of the population.
- (d) "Mye" (city) is always headed by a Japanese in other positions in the city may be held by Koreans.
- The members of "Mye" (provisional) are predominantly Japanese. In 1942 the members of Cholla-do (Cholla-do), Chongchong-do (Chongchong-do), Chongchong-do (Chongchong-do), and Chongchong-do (Chongchong-do) were Koreans, the others Japanese.

c. Since 1940 an change has been noted in the number of Koreans holding important positions.

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