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Telegraphic Text

December 25, 1958.

Dear Mr. President:

The recent developments in the Korean National Assembly prompt me to write directly to you to express my personal concern. I understand that action to revise the National Security Law was taken in order to provide a more effective legal basis to deal with communist infiltration, espionage and subversion efforts in the Republic of Korea. This is an objective with which we, of course, strongly agree. The manner in which this law was adopted by the National Assembly, however, greatly troubles me.

The Republic of Korea and you, Mr. President, enjoy the high esteem of the American people. We have made common cause with you during tragic times of trial and we have sought to contribute to the reconstruction and development of your country ever since then. We intend to continue this course to the extent we are able. It is because of our relationship that it grieves and disturbs me to read the reports which have appeared lately of the incidents which attended the consideration and passage of this bill. Regrettably, the manner in which the law has just been passed, with Democratic Party assemblymen confined outside the Assembly Hall, will raise serious doubts in the minds of the Allies and friends of the Republic of Korea as to the merits of the law, regardless of its true value or the real necessity for the law. To the extent such doubts are raised we are handicapped in our efforts to muster the strong support we desire for Korea in the United Nations and elsewhere. The image which Korean actions create abroad necessarily affects our ability in this regard.

This development is now attracting the attention of the press and public of the United States. It would be my hope that in implementing the law the Republic of Korea Government will demonstrate

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that it will be used, as it was announced it was intended, to deal effectively with the communist threat of subversion and that the apprehensions that have been voiced as to the prospects of the continued growth of democratic and representative government in the Republic of Korea will have been without foundation.

I have written you in this way, Mr. President, as a friend of Korea and trust that you will receive my comments in this spirit.

Sincerely,

Dwight D. Eisenhower

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