MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

Re: Training of Korean Coast Guard by United States Coast Guard Personnel.

We have been requested by the Secretary of the Navy to reconsider our original refusal to make eight officers and eight enlisted men available to train the Korean Coast Guard. Our refusal was based on budget restrictions and personnel limitations. quoted below are the Navy’s arguments that the Coast Guard undertake this project:

"To assist in the administration of Korea by the U.S. Military Government, the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, General MacArthur, has established a Korean National Civil Police Force with a Korean manned Coast Guard as a component part thereof. This Korean Coast Guard is not intended to be the nucleus of a Korean Navy. It is needed to suppress piracy in Korean coastal waters, the smuggling of critically needed food items between Korea and Japan, the illegal entry into Korea of Koreans from China and the illegal shipment of Japanese to Japan from Korea. The Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers has requested the Joint Chiefs of Staff to arrange for the detail of 17 officers and 34 enlisted personnel of the U.S. Navy or U.S. Coast Guard to supervise and train the Koreans for operating this..."
Coast Guard. It is his stated intention that as the Koreans become proficient they will gradually replace such U.S. personnel. On 10 May 1946, you informed the Secretary of War, in reply to his query in the matter, that at that time the Commandant of the Coast Guard could not furnish personnel for the training of the Korean Coast Guard because all U.S. Coast Guard personnel were needed to discharge statutory functions.

"The Joint Chiefs of Staff believe that such a Korean Coast Guard is needed by the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers to control properly the coastal waters of Korea, in order that full support may be given to United States policies in the occupation of Japan and Korea; that its establishment is authorized; and that the requisite ships and craft are substantially available from Navy surpluses and can legally be loaned to the U.S. Military Government in Korea. The training of Korean personnel for this Coast Guard can be accomplished only by providing United States personnel, and, for work of such nature, the only readily available source for the needed training personnel is either the U.S. Coast Guard or the U.S. Navy.

"In order to avoid any semblance of a United States sponsored Korean Navy and thus provide grounds for a charge by the Soviet Government that the United States is setting up its naval power on the coast of Korea, I consider it highly preferable that the training of this Korean Coast Guard be carried out by U.S. Coast Guard personnel rather than by U.S. Navy personnel, if at all possible."
"In view of the international policy implications involved, the character of the work to be performed for which the Coast Guard is especially trained and proficiently fitted, its importance in the eyes of General MacArthur, and the small number of officers and men involved, I request that you reconsider the matter of providing U.S. Coast Guard personnel to the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers for the training of the Korean Coast Guard, in the hope that you will be able to arrange for the Commandant of the Coast Guard to furnish the necessary personnel."

In the absence of a directive from you Coast Guard is not prepared to divert its personnel for this work. If you consider that this is an undertaking which should be carried out by the Coast Guard please indicate your approval below.

(Signed) John G. Snyder

Secretary of the Treasury

Approved:

Harry S. Truman

The White House

Aug 7 1946

Orig to Coast Guard: 8/8/46