

GIs and Koreans, The First Impression, 1945-1948

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I

For three years the United States occupied Korea between 1945 and 1948 and left a strong mark in the memories of Koreans and Americans about each other. Never before had Koreans lived with such a large number of non-Asian troops in their midst, 70,000 at its peak. Never before had Americans been the occupiers in a liberated, foreign land either. The interactions between Korean and American soldiers took a unique place in the narrative of post-liberated Korea.

Unlike other areas of US occupation, however, it was not easy to find stories of GIs spontaneously tossing chocolates and candies to Korean children.¹ Unlike in other occupation areas in Asia, rarely did Korean women marry American soldiers. What American soldiers saw in Korea might have not impressed them — political struggles, a depressed economy, poverty, and violence — but they did not have much chance to see Koreans differently. This paper argues that the surprisingly universal and negative way Americans described Koreans at the end of the occupation period were first and foremost constructed by Washington's policy (or lack thereof) toward Korea. In addition, an unusually strict fraternity ban from the US Army Military Government (USAMGIK) also

¹ For GIs' generosity in Japan, see John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1999), 207. For GIs' friendliness in Germany, see Petra Goedde, *GIs and Germans: Culture, Gender and Foreign Relations, 1945-1949*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003). Goedde argues that GI's personal exposure to the harsh material conditions of Germany and their encounters with German civilians—mostly women and children—changed the American attitude toward Germans from those who were collectively guilty of starting the war to the victims of their leader's war.

played a critical role in limiting American soldiers' interactions with Koreans and influencing their negative stereotypes of Koreans.

Many scholars of US-Korean relations note that the lack of US preparation for its occupation of Korea as well as Korea's low importance in Washington's postwar strategy combined with the internal political struggles among Koreans led to the breakout of the Korean War in 1950.² While agreeing with these scholars, this paper seeks to shed light on the interaction between Koreans and American soldiers during the occupation period by examining the impact of the ill-prepared occupation on GIs in Korea and the formation of GIs' negative perceptions of Koreans.

II

Koreans, at first, welcomed the Americans as liberators. On Sept. 9, 1945, when the first group of the 25,000-strong 24th Corps of the Tenth US Army landed at Inch'ŏn, thousands of Koreans came out to celebrate.³ Koreans "rush[ed] out to greet Americans and offer[ed] apples and bottles of wine,"⁴ one American newspaper reported. Koreans showed less suspicion toward entering Americans than did people in countries formerly

² A few recent examples of scholarship of the topic include Allan R. Millett, *The War for Korea, 1945-1950: A House Burning* (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 2005) and Bonnie B.C. Oh, ed., *Korea Under the American Military Government, 1945-1948* (Westpoint: Praeger, 2002).

³ When the first element of the US Army XVI Corps arrived in Korea, many Koreans came out to welcome the American forces, only to find that the Japanese police were there to disperse them. During the confrontation, police killed two and injured a dozen Koreans. For this, see Yi Wan-pum, "haepangchikhu kuknaechŏngch'iseryŏkkwa mikukū kwangae, 1945-1948 [The relations between the USAMGIK and Korean political groups, 1945-1948]," in *haepangchŏnhusaŭi chaeinsik (chaeinsik)* [The New Interpretation of Korean History between Liberation and the Korean War], eds., Park Chi-hyang, et al. (Seoul: Ch'aeksesang, 2006), 77.

⁴ *New York Times*, 24 September 1945.

colonized by European powers because Koreans had never been subjugated by a Western country, and the allies had defeated the Korean's most hated enemy.⁵

However, during the three years of US occupation, the initial enthusiasm of Koreans dissipated. Koreans had to ask themselves what Americans intended to achieve by a divided occupation, how far they would go to help establish a democratic government, and, of course, how much Koreans could gain from their relations with the United States. For many Koreans, the idea that this powerful nation would leave Korea alone after a temporary occupation became unimaginable, especially after the United States and the Soviet Union announced the possibility of a trusteeship in the country in December 1945. Some Koreans came to fear that US soldiers were merely replacing Japanese colonizers as they heard increasingly number of reports of Americans beating and robbing Koreans.⁶ Others showed ambivalent attitudes toward the American military presence. Korean conservatives, who had prospered under Japanese authority and initially embraced the American presence, often developed resentment over the social and cultural implications of the American troop presence.⁷ A year after his arrival in Korea,

⁵ For the same reason, the Chinese welcomed arriving US Marine occupation forces in Qingdao, northern China. For this, see Zhiguo Yang, "US Marines in Qingdao: Military-Civilian Interaction, Nationalism, and China's Civil War, 1945-1949," Ph. D. dissertation, (College Park, MD: University of Maryland, 1998), 90-92.

⁶ One of the most high profile GI crime during the occupation period occurred in January 1947. Four armed GIs raped three Korean female passengers in a railroad compartment while threatening the lives of other passengers. This incident stirred great protests in Korea. Many Korean political organizations made strong public statements on the incident, calling the rape "barbaric behavior" and "total disrespect of Koreans." Some Korean editorials asked why the "leader of democracy" would commit such a "heinous action." Initially USAMGIK dismissed Korean protest and demand for investigation as a "manifestation of a 'whispering' campaign against the Occupation Forces." For detail of the case, see "G2 Weekly Summary" of 5-12 January 1947 and of 23 February-2 March 1947, Box 59, RG 554, NARA II; *Chosŏn Ilbo*, 10 January 1947, 12 January 1947. This gang rape case was also discussed in Chŏn Sang-in, "haepang kong'ganŭi sahoesa [Political geography and social history of Korea, 1945-1950] in *chaeinsik*, eds. Park Chi-hyang, et al., vol. II, 157-158.

⁷ "Memorandum by Lieutenant General John R. Hodge to General of the Army Douglas MacArthur at Tokyo," 24 September 1945, *Foreign Relations of the United States, (FRUS)*, 1945, VI, 1054-1055;

commander of the US occupation forces in Korea Lieutenant General John R. Hodge found “natural antipathy of Koreans against any outside control.”⁸

General Hodge was not the only one who felt it difficult to work with and interact with Koreans. Journalist John Gunther likened Koreans to the Poles or the Irish because all three ethnic groups exhibited “stubborn, strongly individualistic” characteristics because they had been “perpetually tortured by invasion.”⁹ In a 1971 interview, John J. Muccio, the first US ambassador for the Republic of Korea (ROK) said this attitude was the reason USAMGIK had “a hell of time getting any cooperation whatsoever from the Koreans” during the occupation.¹⁰

American troops expressed similar sentiments, which partially explained why Korean duty became so unpopular among them. Stories circulated among GIs of their experience with Koreans who “stole everything they could get their hands on.” They easily concluded that Koreans were “inherently dishonest,” had “poor moral character.” Moreover, many felt Koreans disrespected Americans.¹¹ Walter Simmons, a reporter for the *Chicago Tribune*, interviewed many American soldiers transported from Japan to Korea, yet found none had kind words to say about Korea. When he asked how they liked going to Korea, “Are you kiddin [sic]?” was the first response. A private defined Koreans as “hostile.” He explained: “You try to take picture of a Korean child and he runs. You

“Current Trends in Korea,” 19 August 1946, Box 249, Record Group (RG) 165: Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD (NARA II).

⁸ “Hodge to MacArthur,” 28 October 1946, *FRUS*, 1946, VIII, 751.

⁹ John Gunther, *The Riddle of MacArthur: Japan, Korea and the Far East* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1951), 174.

¹⁰ Oral History Interview for the Truman Library, John J. Muccio interview with Jerry N. Hess, 10 February 1971 and 18 February 1971, Washington, D. C., available at the Truman Library website, <http://www.trumanlibrary.org/oralhist/muccio.htm>, accessed on 24 June 2008.

¹¹ Fred Ottoboni, *Korea between the Wars: A Soldier's Story* (Sparks, NV: Vincente Books, inc., 1997), 295.

treat the Korean nice and he cheats you. You leave anything around, and the next minute it is gone.”¹² A tour in Korea was so unpopular among American soldiers in the Far East Command in Japan that it was compared to diarrhea and gonorrhea as something to avoid.¹³ It was not an accident that USAMIGK recorded only a negligent number of reenlistment volunteers.¹⁴

One Army captain, however, made an insightful comment about the ways in which his fellow soldiers responded to Simmons’ interview. He agreed with other soldiers that Korea was a tough place and Koreans were not always honest with Americans. Yet, the real problem was, according to the captain, the Army had failed to make friends with the Korean people.¹⁵ He was right. It was not just Americans and Koreans, but US authorities who played a significant role in the way soldiers saw Koreans. The US government, USAMGIK, Korean political leaders, as well as Koreans and American soldiers, contributed to constructing images of Korea in the minds of American soldiers. Two institutions, the US government and USAMGIK, however, were the most responsible because they laid the foundation on which Koreans and Americans interacted and understood each other.

III

The rapid development in the last months of WWII played the most critical role in the divided occupation of Korea. The duty of implementing the occupation policy fell to

¹² Walter Simmons interviewed American soldiers on board of *U.S.S. Hotel*, not dated, Box 1, RG 554, NARA II.

¹³ Don Oberdorfer, *The Two Koreas: A Contemporary History* (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1997), 7.

¹⁴ Headquarters, US Army Forces in Korea on Regular Army Recruiting Program signed by Col. J. W. Fraser on behalf of Hodge, 12 November 1947, Box 86, RG 554, NARA II. In December 1947, Korean Base Command’s recruitment effort resulted in the following outcome: eight men signed up for two years, one for a year, and seven for six months.

¹⁵ Walter Simmons’s interview, *Ibid.*

Lt. Gen. Hodge's 24th Corps primarily because of their proximity to the Korean peninsula, 600 miles away, at the time of Japan's surrender.¹⁶ During World War II, Hodge had led troops in seventeen battles and earned recognition as the "Patton of the Pacific," and as a "soldier's soldier" because he shared risks and hardships with his men.¹⁷ This "tough, bluff soldier who had a good gristly record as a combat general" was, however, not "a political genius."¹⁸ He lacked administrative and political experience. Moreover, he had no prewar familiarity with Asia and had only one month of preparation time.

Hodge's appointment shows the low priority US policy makers gave Korea, second only to the Philippines in its strategic unimportance to US security.¹⁹ Hodge had nowhere near the prestige and recognition of Gen. Dwight Eisenhower, the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers (SCAP) in Europe, Gen. Douglas MacArthur, SCAP in the Pacific, or even Gen. Mark Clark in Austria. As no powerful constituency existed in the United States for Korea, Washington put limited thought into how to accomplish the occupation tasks there. Hodge was, according to a journalist John Gunther, "like a blind man fumbling in a fog."²⁰ Historian James I. Matray argues that the selection of Gen. Hodge as occupation commander in South Korea was a "terrible mistake," and "the most important early decision leading to the Korean War."²¹ Political scientist Bonnie Oh states the problem of US occupation policy toward Korea was that it lacked "vision,

¹⁶ "Brief History of the XXIV Corps" Box 45, RG 554, NARA II.

¹⁷ For John Hodge's obituary, *New York Times*, 13 November 1963.

¹⁸ John Gunther, *The Riddle of MacArthur: Japan, Korea and the Far East* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1951), 180.

¹⁹ "JCS to State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee (SWNCC)," 5 May 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, VI, 737-739.

²⁰ Gunther, 181.

²¹ James I. Matray, "Hodge Podge: American Occupation Policy in Korea, 1945-1948," *Korea Studies*, 19 (1995), 18.

planning, and coordination between the branches of the US home government and the US personnel in Korea, as well as a paucity of consideration for the people of the land.”²²

To the American troops in Korea, the lack of overall preparation from the top meant they knew virtually nothing about Korea. They neither attended an orientation about the country nor learned about their duty. Without any advance knowledge of the place to which they were sent and of the purpose of their occupation, American soldiers found their duty meaningless, daunting, and boring.²³ Some soldiers relieved their boredom by harassing Koreans they met on the road. When they drove army trucks and encountered Korean pedestrians, they drove very close to them, just for fun. They picked up random Koreans on the road to do their manual labor, a practice the GIs called “shanghaiing.”²⁴

USAMGIK’s constant reminder to soldiers to treat Koreans as liberated people indicated that GIs often failed to respect them.²⁵ This gap of understanding was found not only in the rank-and-file soldiers, but also in officers. Foreign service officer Gregory Henderson tersely stated, “No American officer had at that time [1946] any concept of the complex background of the men and groups with which he was dealing.”²⁶ Even in 1947, Hodge complained his soldiers received inadequate orientation about their duty and the challenges they faced in Korea.²⁷

²² Bonnie B. C. Oh, “Introduction: Setting,” in Bonnie B. C. Oh, ed., *Korea Under the American Military Government, 1945-1948* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2002), 3.

²³ Carl Vipperman, interview with the author, 17 March 2006; Ottoboni, 114, 201. Vipperman joined the Army at age of 18 in 1946. As an occupation soldier, he served there for 18 months.

²⁴ Ottoboni, 233-234; Carl Vipperman, Interview with the author, 17 March 2006.

²⁵ As late as November 1946, General Hodge had to give orders to his troops not to consider Koreans as “occupied” people. For this, see 11 November 1946, USAFIK Press Release, Box 24, RG 554, NARA II.

²⁶ Henderson, 340. Henderson gave a credit to “devout young officer” Captain James Hasuman as the only exception.

²⁷ “Hodge to Cecil Brown,” 10 June, 1947.

Another difficult problem that caused great inefficiency and increasing misunderstanding was the language barrier. Almost nobody in USAMGIK could speak Korean.²⁸ MP Lawrence Gelfand realized the lack of occupation planning when he found no competent interpreter for Koreans in his unit²⁹. By contrast, at least seven thousand US soldiers had completed extensive Japanese language courses during WWII.³⁰ The language barrier became a serious obstacle at the operational and administrative level. Misunderstandings provoked several conflicts which developed into racial insults and even brawls between Korean officers and American advisors.³¹ General Han Mu-hyöp, one of the first graduates of the Korean Military Academy, recalled that most of the misunderstandings between American military advisors and Korean officers were caused by the language barrier.³² One American reporter wrote that the language barrier prevented Americans and Koreans from developing close personal relationship.³³

“I’ve got six more months to go,” an army officer of USAMGIK lamented one day in October 1946.³⁴ His statement captured the sentiment of the US occupation forces who lived in such a poor, foreign place. This was, however, not just the whining of a malcontent soldier living in an alien culture without adequate supplies. The wretched material conditions in Korea were surely challenging to most Americans, yet the lack of

²⁸ Notable exceptions are protestant missionaries. Presbyterian missionaries Horace G. Underwood and his son Horace C. Underwood worked in the Department of Education, Arthur C. Bunce, who had worked for the YMCA in Korea during the 1920s, became an economic and agricultural advisor to General Hodge. Other missionaries, like Bill Shaw, Harold Voelkel, Howard Moffett, and Charles Bernheisel, also worked for the USAMGIK.

²⁹ Gelfand was one of the first American soldiers arriving in Korea in 1945, Gelfand, a letter to the author, 15 August 2005.

³⁰ Wesley R. Fishel and Alfred H. Hausrath, *Language Problems of the US Army during Hostilities in Korea* (Chevy Chase: The Johns Hopkins University, Operational Research Office, 1958), 39.

³¹ Harold Noble, *Embassy at War* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1975), 28.

³² Han Mu-hyöp, in *Naega kyököün küngukkwa kaldüing* [Oral History Collection, vol. III: My Experiences of Korean Independence and Ensuing Conflicts], ed. Han’guk chöngsinmunhwa yönguwön (Seoul: Dosöchülpan sün-in, 2004), 197.

³³ *Wall Street Journal*, 16 January 1947.

³⁴ Mark Gayn, *Japan Diary* (Rutland, VT: Tuttle, 1981), 361.

preparation for occupation from higher up deepened their frustration. The officer's comment reflects the consequences of the ill-coordinated efforts of his commander, his government, and how differently the occupied and the occupiers understand the presence of US troops. The lack of a systematic approach to America's role in Korea, in addition to the struggles between Korean politicians, and the increasing tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union, made the everyday lives of American soldiers and Koreans even more difficult.

Korea, being strategically less important, earned an infamous nickname, "the end of the [supply] line." The soldiers grumbled that "folks at home don't seem to care now that the war is over, whether we are getting supplies or not."³⁵ Inadequate housing and insufficient and irregular delivery of supplies added to their discontent. Many officers pointed out that the supply problems fostered low morale among the rank and file.³⁶

Soldiers began to write about the miserable situation to their families and congressmen back in the United States.³⁷ This led Congressman John Sheridan, acting chairman of the House Military Affairs Committee, to visit Korea. He reported that the troops in Korea had the lowest morale of any he observed; even fruit juice or toothpaste became luxury items in Korea. Returning to the United States in September 1946, Sheridan secured the support of his committee to recommend Hodge be removed from his command. Hodge cannot be solely blamed for the conditions, but Sheridan's actions

³⁵ Ottoboni, 295.

³⁶ Gayn, 409-410.

³⁷ For example, Gelfand told the author that he wrote a letter about the supply problem in the *Pacific Stars and Stripes*, Fred Ottoboni's mother wrote to the Department of Army on 11 March 1947, Ottoboni, 133, Rosemary Kelly from Kansas City wrote to the President on 6 October 1945, Box 249, RG 165, NARA II.

underlined the fact that the paucity of supplies had a direct correlation with low troop morale.³⁸

Some soldiers tried to cope with the lack of supplies by trading with Koreans, but this was a serious violation of their orders. Circular No. 39 of March 1947 prohibited “sale, transfer, assignment, or load of American goods to Korean nationals.” Its counterpart in Korean law, USAMGIK Ordinance No. 72, issued on May 4, 1946, prohibited Koreans from buying, receiving, possessing, or using any property which was brought to Korea for the personal use of the American personnel.³⁹ This means Americans could not liquidate their property to Korea even if they wanted to give it away.

A letter signed by eleven American soldiers in Korea, who called themselves, “the Sissies,” poignantly exposed their dilemma. “It is a court-martial offense to trade with the Koreans, but the Army does not (underline original) issue us light bulbs or brooms for our huts. Therefore, we chance a prison sentence by trading with the Koreans to obtain these items.”⁴⁰ Their complains, which Hodge and the War Department wanted to brush aside, were supported by countless court-martial charges documented in the special courts-martial record of the US Occupation Forces in Korea. Approximately one third of sixty-one special courts-martial cases involving Koreans and Americans in the record are about Americans’ illegal trade with Koreans and their possession of Korean currency.⁴¹

³⁸ “Personal letter from John R. Hodge to Douglas MacArthur,” 26 September 1946, Box 33, RG 554, NARA II.

³⁹ “Circular No. 39” and “Ordinance No. 72,” Box 84, RG 554, NARA II.

⁴⁰ For “Just a bunch of Sissies” letter signed by 11 soldiers in Korea and Hodge’s answer to the war department inquiry of it, see Hodge to Maj. Gen. Floyd L. Parks (Public Information division, War Department) Box 2, RG 554, Entry A1 1370, NARA II.

⁴¹ Record Group 554 of the National Archives II (College Park, MD) contains quite comprehensive special courts-martial record of the USAMGIK. Alphabetically organized, Box 227 through 242 includes special courts-martial cases of the last name G to Z.

The prohibition of trading with Koreans, however, was just one of several fraternity bans USAMKIK imposed on its soldiers. In May 1946, the USAFIK prohibited GIs' consumption of Korean food and beverages.⁴² The next year, this ban slightly changed to prohibit GIs from entering Korean restaurants. Hodge publicly stated his reason for this measure in a *National Geographic* article. He explained that he prohibited Americans from eating in Korean restaurants because the spiciness of Korean dishes "cause[d] gastric troubles" for Americans who were not accustomed to them.⁴³ Privately he admitted that "much of Korean food is unsanitary by our standards."⁴⁴ The more pressing cause for such prohibition was to control VD rates among American soldiers. The ban on American entry in Korean restaurants was coupled with the regulation of the number of female employees in restaurants and other entertainment industries.⁴⁵ An American soldier who attempted to break the ban and braved an "off-limits" area would face severe punishment. If caught, he was to be court-martialed and could receive a maximum of six months confinement and forfeiture of two-thirds of his pay for six months.⁴⁶

In addition, American soldiers were prohibited from transporting Koreans in army vehicles. Koreans holding "Koreans authorized" passes were only allowed in army vehicles. Even Korean employees of US organizations were not authorized to be

⁴² "Letter from the Headquarters, USAFIK," 4 May 1946, Box 235, RG 554, NARA II; *Donga Ilbo*, 23 May 1946.

⁴³ Lt. Gen. John R. Hodge, "With the U.S. Army in Korea," *National Geographic*, 91.6 (June 1947), 833.

⁴⁴ Hodge to Rudolph De Winter, 27 June 1947, RG 554, NARA II.

⁴⁵ The prohibition came with the cancelation of license for restaurants designated to serve Americans and the limitation of the number of waitress employed in restaurants. A Korean newspaper projected the new measure would reduce the number of waitress from approximately 1,000 to 300 in Seoul. See *Donga Ilbo*, 23 May 1946.

⁴⁶ For example, on 5 February 1947, twenty-year old Private George Miller, Jr. who was caught in "off-limit" area received a sentence of three months of hard labor and fifty five percent of pay forfeiture. See, Box 233, RG 554, NARA II.

transported in an army vehicle during off-duty hours.⁴⁷ Several special courts-martial charges involved the violation of this order. It was not unusual to see an American driver sped up to avoid being stopped at an MP check point because he had a Korean passenger in an army vehicle.⁴⁸

All these measures to limit the interactions between Koreans and Americans seemed to produce successful results. The serious punishment attached to the non-fraternization orders kept American soldiers in line. The VD rate in the Korean occupation was relatively lower than that of other areas of occupation. For instance, the Korean VD rate in 1948 was 83, whereas the VD rate in Germany in 1945 reached 250.⁴⁹ Seoul had fewer restaurants, bars, and other entertainment facilities than other major Asian cities under US occupation. In Seoul, the estimated number of female workers in restaurants and entertainment industries was less than 1,000 in 1946, according to one official count, whereas in Tokyo the number of known prostitutes in Tokyo was estimated at 8,000 in 1947.⁵⁰ Qingdao under the occupation of the US Marines had 400 cafes and 50 dance halls which employed 500-600 dancers.⁵¹

Another measure of interactions, the marriage record, was more telling. Congress enacted the GI Bride Bill to help the fiancées and the brides of GIs accompany their spouses home. Under the Public Law 471 (Fiancée Law) of December 1945, by June

⁴⁷ Citation in the special courts-martial case of Pfc Jesse G. Nelson, 5 July 1946, Box 234, RG 5544, NARA II.

⁴⁸ On 30 June 1948, Tec 4th Thomas Steel, Jr. was caught when trying to pass by a check point. For the detail, see Box 239, RG 554, NARA II.

⁴⁹ Earl F. Ziemke, *The US in the Occupation of Germany, 1944-1946* (Washington D.C: Center for Military History, US Army, 1990), 332.

⁵⁰ *Seoul sinmun*, March 12, 1946; Shiela K. Johnson, *American Attitudes toward Japan, 1841-1975* (Stanford: Hoover Institute on War and Peace, 1975), 62. John W. Dower recorded estimate 55,000 and 70,000 Japanese women worked as full-time or part-time prostitutes in Japan in 1947. For this, see John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1999), 132.

⁵¹ Yang, 126.

1948, 2,643 Chinese and 296 Japanese wives of GIs had entered the United States. There were no separate records for Korean wives in the published Immigration and Naturalization Services record, but USAMGIK recorded thirteen marriages between Korean-American soldiers and Korean women.⁵²

In defeated Germany, the soldiers' fraternization with former enemy citizens, women and children in particular, despite a fraternization ban led to the eventual lifting of the ban in the fall of 1945.⁵³ Even though the ban against American soldiers being friends with Axis personnel was already defunct and practically over in Germany, more and more restrictions were set to criminalize normal interactions between the GIs and Koreans. In order to protect American soldiers' health and to discipline them, the USAMGIK seriously enforced the "fraternity" ban in Korea. The authorities might have gained their objectives, but these measures effectively eliminated meaningful interactions between GIs and Koreans.

IV

This paper focuses on the encounters between Koreans and American soldiers during the three years of US occupation from 1945 through 1948. Rapidly developing tension between the United States and the Soviet Union, as well as ferocious political struggles within Korea, marked the tumultuous period. By exploring the interactions between American soldiers and the Korean people, this paper concludes that overwhelmingly negative stereotypes of Koreans by American soldiers are, in fact, the outcome of the USAMGIK's policy rather than random occurrence.

⁵² Department of Justice, *Annual Report of the Immigration and Naturalization Services, 1947-1949*, (Washington D.C.: GPO), Table 9; 20 August 1947 Box 24, RG 554, NARA II.

⁵³ Ziemke, 327.

The lack of understanding of their duty in Korea as well as USAFIK's effective fraternity ban limited possible friendly interactions between Koreans and American soldiers. The Koreans had to keep themselves away from American soldiers in order to avoid any unnecessary breach of the military government's ordinances. In the mean time, American soldiers found Koreans hostile and their presence unwelcomed. American soldiers' sense of Korean hostility illustrated how the policy from the top influenced the people's perceptions at the bottom. The significant changes of this perception came only when the American soldiers returned to the peninsula during the Korean War. With clear objective of their fighting and working with determined Korean soldiers, American soldiers began to change their negative perceptions of Koreans.