DECLARATION FOR DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL SALVATION

On this day, March 1, we hear the clear echoes of the events of March 1, 1919, 57 years ago, when the battle cry of this people resounded throughout the world, crying out for independence. We would be overwhelmed by a sense of guilt towards those before us who shed their blood to save the nation if, in the present situation, we did not concentrate our determination by issuing this "Declaration for Democratic National Salvation" to our country and to the world.

Although the division of our country shattered the exultation felt at our liberation on August 15, 1945, and brought us successive ordeals, the people never lost their hope. Arising out of the ruins of the Korean War, the heroic April 19 students, who toppled the Syngman Rhee dictatorship, restored the people's belief in liberal democracy.

But this only lasted a moment. Once again our people were bound by the iron chains of a dictatorial government, and there was a "separation of powers" only in appearance. Under the pretext of national security, the freedoms of belief and conscience withered day by day, and the freedoms of expression and academic independence were choked to death. The R.O.K.-Japan Treaty, concluded under the present regime, resulted in this country's economy becoming entirely controlled by Japan, with all industries and the labor force becoming the victims of Japan's economic invasion.

The Republic of Korea has come to be seen by the international community as an orphan, and what was once described by the United Nations as the only legitimate government on the Korean peninsula has now been reduced to a mere myth. Turning its back on the emergence of the Third World as a new strength in world history -- a decisive wedge between the East and West camps -- the R.O.K. government has depended entirely on the Western world, and has now even been abandoned by the Western world.

The present regime must take the responsibility for having dragged the country to this point. It should lament deeply having lost the democratic nations' trust for having oppressed the domestic democratic opposition forces, and it should reproach itself for the fact that before it laid the blame for changes in the U.N. on the emergence of the Third World, it did not more accurately discern the current of world history.

In response to our earnest wishes for "National Unification," this should be a time to take steps to encourage and rally democratic forces at home and abroad, but instead, at the hands of a one-man dictatorship, human rights are being trampled and we are being deprived of our freedom.

In this way, our people are losing their sense of purpose and direction, and their belief in democracy, and the country is moving step by step towards total collapse. We cannot remain indifferent to this situation. We must go beyond the political interests and strategies of either party to chart the course this country must take to avert disaster, and with this conviction we issue this Declaration.

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I. THIS COUNTRY MUST STAND ON A BASIS OF DEMOCRACY

Democracy is the national policy of the Republic of Korea. Therefore, the legitimacy of the Republic of Korea is in its democracy. It follows that democracy should not be weakened under any pretext. At this moment, in a time of intense competition with the communist "regime" in the north, the kind of strength which we must muster is the power of democracy. Although a strong national defense and economic power need to be nurtured as well, when these are not backed by a democratic capacity, they are no more than a castle built on sand.

What then is democracy? We do not mean by this specific systems being practised in foreign countries. Rather, we point to a faith in a system, formed in compliance with the will of the members of society, based on the best original ideas but continuously being improved, which takes into account the rights, interests, and happiness of all of its members.

Therefore, democracy ought to proceed not as much "for the people" as "from the people." The judgement about what is good for the country and the people must itself come from the people. Democracy is not achieved simply by undertaking what one believes is for the people without listening to their judgement. To think that this is all that democracy requires is to mistake commands and obedience for democracy. This can never be "for the people." The people's desire is not obedience, but full responsible participation. The people's fundamental right to oversee and to criticize the government must never be abandoned. For this would be to abandon democracy itself.

What, then, is the way to realize government "from the people"? The freedom of the people to express themselves, without either physical or spiritual intimidation, must be guaranteed.

Therefore, we demand the immediate abolition of the emergency measures which suppress the people's freedom, and the release of the democratic citizens and students who have been imprisoned for demanding democracy. So that the people's will can be freely expressed, we demand that the freedoms of speech, assembly, and press be returned to the people.

Next, we insist on the recovery of parliamentary politics, which has been deprived of any substance by the Yushin Constitution. The freely expressed democratic will of the people must be reflected in the legislative decisions of the National Assembly, and the government must reflect these in its administration. A regime which prevents this, while saying it is "for the people," has in fact no intention to be "for the people."

Thirdly, we demand the right of an independent judiciary. Without an independent judiciary the people will have no protection from the tyranny of the powerful. Therefore, an administration which treats the judiciary as no more than its servant reveals that from the beginning it has had no intention of being "for the people."

II. THE DESIGN AND STRUCTURE OF OUR COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC FOUNDATIONS MUST BE FUNDAMENTALLY RE-EXAMINED

We fully understand that economic development is important for nurturing national strength. But this does not mean that economic strength is in itself the strength of a nation. Nevertheless, the present regime holds the narrow perception that economic strength equals national strength, and it is sacrificing everything for the sake of singleminded concentration on economic development.
But what are the real results? In the years 1974-75, an alarming trade deficit amounting to four billion dollars has been incurred through the export industry, which is based on exploitation of the people's economy. There is little possibility that this large a deficit will be narrowed in the near future. As of the end of 1975, our country's foreign debt reached a total of 5,780 million dollars. On whose shoulders will the load of this incredible debt be laid -- at a time when companies based on loans are becoming insolvent and going bankrupt? The present structure of our nation's economy, based on plans to sell over our workers and farmers to be exploited by lending agencies and foreign capital, with even the rights to organize labor unions and to strike taken away from the workers, has from the beginning not been in the interests of our country's people.

It was a mistake not to first foster the strength of the domestic economy, and upon that base to encourage export industry. To expect to construct enormous modern industries on the charred remains of an agricultural economy was a delusion. The reliance of the economic system solely on foreign loans from the beginning was a large part of the cause of corruption.

If things continue as they are, it is only a matter of time before this country's economy collapses. The present regime has long since lost the capacity to save the nation from an economic break-down. The reason for this is that irrationality and corruption of the economy have originated in the very heart of the power structure itself.

Because the situation has reached this point, there is no other way open than for the Park regime to take the responsibility and to step down. It is our judgement that a change of administration is necessary, in order to prevent an economic collapse that would undermine the world community's confidence, and so that we can request a postponement on the repayment of loans to loaning countries and international banks.

If this regime does not have the suitable humble courage to do so, then we urge it to thoroughly re-examine the country's economic structure, beginning at its very heart. Stop concealing the real situation and making justifications for it, and instead acknowledge the situation honestly. Reject the bloated budget that has been established without regard for the people's tax-paying ability. Resolutely carry out a thorough redistribution of wealth, and build up the people's purchasing power.

If this is done, the absurd situation of the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer -- a breeding ground for communism -- could be corrected; the people's confidence in liberal democracy would be restored; and the initiative for "National Unification" could be grasped vis-a-vis the communist regime in the north.

III. "NATIONAL UNIFICATION" -- OUR COMPATRIOTS' SUPREME TASK TODAY

The tragic division of our land for thirty years since liberation has given an excuse for dictatorship in both north and south, and has caused the withering of the spiritual and material resources which should have been mobilized for national prosperity, the people's happiness, and creative development.

For the north and south to have a combined standing army strength of over a million men, and to maintain these forces with modern weapons, is impossible for the productive capacity and economies of the Korean peninsula without
STATEMENT OF SEOUL DISTRICT PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE

Issued March 10, 1976, 5:30 p.m. by
Suh Chung Gak, Chief Prosecutor

On March 10, 1976, the Seoul District Prosecutor arrested under the provisions of the Presidential Emergency Decree No. Nine, twenty persons who took part in the attempt by a group of opposition leaders to use the March 1 Commemorative Mass at Myong Dong Cathedral, Seoul, to incite a conspiracy to overthrow the government.

These persons of the opposition utilized every opportunity to gather anti-government elements; successively they have camouflaged themselves in the "National Council for Restoration of Democracy", "Galilee Church" and other religious or social groups, in order to build illegal organizations, holding various kinds of prayer meetings, training sessions and gatherings, under the pretense of religious activity; they have met together from time to time, plotting and using such illegal slogans as those calling for the "removal of the Emergency Decrees" or demanding the "Resignation of the Government", have agitated for the overthrow of the government.

The most extreme aspect of their efforts to carry out this unconstitutional agitation for the overthrow of the government was their use of foreign influence, carrying out all sorts of slanderous intrigues against Korea. However, the majority of the people, being well aware of the importance of national security at the present moment, were not misled by this unlawful agitation, and as it became clear with the passage of time that there was no support from the people, they became impatient; judging that they could no longer delay, Kim Dae Jung, Moon Ik Hwan and Hahn Se Ung formed the core, secured the consent of Yun Po Sun, Chung Il Kyung, Hahn Suk Hon and others, and decided to bring about a mass uprising by means of popular agitation during the spring season.

Believing that March and April, which are chronic times of social unrest in our society, would be a favorable period to strengthen anti-government forces, they decided on the 57th anniversary of the March First movement, to be held March 1, 1976, as the time to bring out into the open their demand for the government's resignation under the banner of "Restoration of Democracy"; under the delusion that by advocating this, they could arouse the general public to respond in a nationwide insurrection, they issued the so-called "Declaration for National Democratic Salvation", scheming that this declaration would incite the audience to set off a demoralization whose closure would ignite a general insurrection that, spreading, would throw society into confusion, so that they could seize the opportunity to overthrow the present administration and capture the government.

These persons, in the process of getting signatures for the so-called "Declaration for National Democratic Salvation" did not even secure the consent or sound out others' intentions, but dealing the use of peoples' names for their own purposes, they shamelessly signed the document. But, because they had no means of their own to mobilize a crowd, they learned
that the March First Commemorative Mass was to take place and, when this
service was concluded and the audience was about to disperse, they suddenly
read the declaration, taking advantage of and abusing this religious event.
The Prosecutor's Office regards this as a serious matter, not only because
it was an agitation of many people to overthrow the government carried out
inside the cathedral by taking advantage of a religious ceremony in an
abuse of religious freedom, but because it was also an act subversive to
the constitutional order; the prosecutor intends to severely restrict by
the law the lawless political activities carried out in the guise of re-
ligious activities by this group of persons with no common sense.

Twenty persons have been indicted in this incident; among them, eleven
leaders, whose crimes were most serious, have been placed under arrest and
taken into custody, and are under criminal investigation. They are:
Kim Dae Jung, Noon Ik Hwan, Nahm Se Ung, Noon Dong Hwan, Lee Moon Yong,
Suh Nam Dong, Ahn Byung Moo, Shin Hyon Bong, Lee Hae Dong, Yun Ban Woong,
and Moon Jung Hyun. Nine persons including: Yun Po Sun, Chung Il Hyung,
Ham Suk Hon, Lee Tae Yong, Lee Oo Jong, Kim Sung Hun, Chang Dok Pil,
Kim Taek An, and Ahn Chun Suk, have not been taken into custody but are
under investigation.

List of Indicted Persons

In Custody

Noon Ik Hwan, 58, pastor
Hahm Se Ung, 35, priest
Kim Dae Jung, 51, unemployed
Noon Dong Hwan, 55, pastor
Lee Moon Yong, 49, unemployed
Suh Nam Dong, 48, unemployed
Ahn Byung Moo, 54, unemployed
Shin Hyon Bong, 46, priest
Lee Hae Dong, 42, pastor
Yun Ban Woong, 66, pastor
Moon Jung Hyun, 36, priest

Not in Custody

Chung Il Hyung, 72, member, National Assembly
Hahm Suk Hon, 75, representative:
Shial ui Sori
Yun Po Sun, 78, unemployed
Lee Tae Yong, 66, Director, Family Legal Counselling Center
Lee Oo Jong, 53, unemployed
Kim Sung Hun, 37, priest
Chang Dok Pil, 36, priest
Kim Taek An, 37, priest
Ahn Chun Suk, 37, priest