

NLT 11-60

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Korean Situation

I. Military Situation.

Latest official reports (as of 2200, 26 June, Washington time) indicate that the capture of Seoul is imminent and that no concerted attempt is being made by southern forces to withdraw for continued resistance south of the capital. All southern troops have been committed to the defense of Seoul and at least one of the four divisions in the Seoul area has been demoralized and cut-up. Southern forces have held in areas east of Seoul and along the east coast, but critical ammunition shortages are developing and a reported landing 35 miles northeast of Pusan threatens to cut over-land supply route from Pusan to the north and east.

Northern forces still have adequate reserves and are capable of launching further large-scale offensives all along the line from Seoul to the east coast. Southern Korean units, their morale deteriorating, are incapable of resisting the determined artillery-tank-air assaults with the equipment now available. Unless southern army believes strong US assistance is imminent, their organized resistance will collapse completely with the fall of Seoul. Latest press reports are more optimistic. For example, the southern Korean Minister in Tokyo has announced that southern forces have launched an offensive north of Seoul. Although these reports attest to the confusion prevailing in the area, CIA does not believe the southern forces are capable of mounting a sustained offensive at this time.

II. Survival Potential.

The President and Cabinet of the Republic of Korea are reported in official US traffic to have left Seoul, probably for Chinhae in southeastern Korea. In view of the brief time available for evacuation it is doubtful if sufficient numbers of government operating personnel have left Seoul to make the government effective at a new location. The Premier, reportedly despairing of "saving anything," has handed over full authority to the Army Chief of Staff. The latter appears equally hopeless in the rapidly deteriorating situation. His morale probably reflects the morale situation throughout the South Korean officer corps.

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in the face of the enemy's exclusive possession of tanks and preponderance of fighter aircraft. The fall of Seoul appears to be immediately imminent. The chances of organized resistance being maintained after Seoul's fall are, at best, minimal, in view of the Chief of Staff's opinion that when Seoul falls resistance is useless, the exhaustion of many types of ammunition employed by ROK forces, and the commitment of all southern forces to the defense of Seoul. It is problematical whether cohesive southern Korean resistance will continue beyond the next 24 hours.

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