

The Sacramento Union

301 CAPITOL MALL
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95812

Nov. 22, 1977

Dear Chol Soo Lee:

My name is Kyung Won Lee (Yi Kyungwon). I am a Korean who came to America in 1950 at age 20 to study. I attended universities and have been working as a newspaperman since 1957. I have been a reporter with The Sacramento Union since 1970.

A couple years ago I read something about your trial in Sacramento and became concerned when I learned you are a Korean and wanted to get in touch with you to see if I could be of any help. But I was tied down with a lot of pressing chores and never did get to getting in touch with you.

A few months ago, I met Tom Kim of San Francisco's Korean Community Service Center. He told me he was saddened by the fact that the Korean community wasn't able to extend help when you needed it most. His service center is only a recent happening. Tom Kim said his gut-feeling was that you got a raw deal in the San Francisco shooting case and that you couldn't have done it. Tom Kim feels --and I feel the same way--that nobody has given a damn about troubled Korean boys trying to make a go in their adopted country. I have also talked with Jeff Mori of the Japanese Community Youth Council. Mori shares the same concern as we do. Mori talked about you a lot with great affection and sadness. I hope to see Tom Kim and Jeff Mori again next week in San Francisco.

I also have talked with your former defense attorney Hamilton L. Hintz of Sacramento. I was recently informed by Mr. Hintz that your appeal was turned down by the appeals court. Also recently I was shocked to learn that you were being charged with slaying an inmate at Tracy.

When I called DVI superintendent Rees, he informed me that I must first write and get your okay before I get to see you at Tracy. I was also told that public defender Craig Holmes is handling your case now, but I have been unable to talk with him since he has been sick.

In Sacramento there is a Korean who has just graduated from UC-Davis as its first Korean law graduate. He's now preparing for the bar examination while working for the Sacramento Legal Aid Society.

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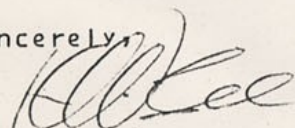
His name is Jay Yoo. He is a good friend of Tom Kim and me. He and I would like to visit with you to find out what the Korean community might be able to do to help. I don't think most of the Koreans in this state have been informed about your troubles.

Deep in my heart I am saddened by what you have gone through as a Korean youth in this country. I know what you had to go through. I have a nephew who ~~xxxx~~ has the same name as yours. He's lucky. He came to this country as a graduate of Seoul National University and now he is a scientist working in Ohio.

It may be too late, but never too late. I can do one thing at least. I want to write about the problems you have run into as a bewildered and helpless Korean boy in America. Hopefully I want to do stories not only for my newspaper here but for the Korean newspapers in California. Maybe the society will listen.

Let me hear from you directly or through your public defender if we can get to visit with you. If it's okay with you, let me know when you can see us.

Sincerely,


Kyung Won Lee

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