

# Dealing with Treason: Retribution against Collaborators in Korea from a Comparative Perspective, 1945-1951

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## Key Korea Related Dates

*Most important events related to political retribution in bold*

1945.8.15	Japanese Surrender
1945.9.7	US Military Government (USAMGIK) founded in South Korea
1945.10.3	Soviet Civil Authority founded in North Korea
1946.3.5	Land Reform launched in North Korea
<b>1946.8</b>	<b>Nationalization of industry in North Korea begins</b>
<b>1946.11</b>	<b>Elections for North Korean Provisional People's Committee</b>
<b>1946.9-11</b>	<b>"Autumn Harvest Uprising" in South Korea</b>
1946.12.12	Interim Assembly inaugurated in South Korea
1947.1	Interim Assembly forms committee to work on anti-traitor law
<b>1947.2</b>	<b>Elections in North Korean for local level people's committees</b>
<b>1947.7.2</b>	<b>Special Law dealing with Collaborators, Traitors, War Criminals, and Profiteers</b> passes (민족반역자부일협력자간상배에 대한특별법률조례). Vetoed by USAMGIK
1948.4.3	Cheju-do uprising begins in full
1948.5.10	National Assembly elections in South Korea
1948.8.15	Republic of Korea founded in South Korea
1948.8.25	Supreme People's Assembly elections in North Korea and underground elections in South Korea
<b>1948.9.7</b>	<b>Law for the Punishment of Anti-National Activities</b> (반민족행위처벌법) passes National Assembly. Syngman Rhee signs it into law September 22 <sup>nd</sup>
1948.9.9	Democratic People's Republic of Korea founded in North Korea
1948.10.19	Yösu rebellion erupts with soldier mutiny.
1948.12	Special Investigative Committee (SIC 반민족행위특별조사위원회, 반민특위) to investigate anti-national activities set up, along with special court, and special police powers dedicated to SIC activities.
<b>1949.1-6</b>	<b>SIC investigates, arrests, and puts suspected traitors on trial in South Korea.</b>
1949.6.6	<b>SIC headquarters attacked by regular police</b> , records of the SIC seized or destroyed, 35 members of SIC abducted by police, tortured, and released the next day. Rhee disbands SIC which is accused of supporting a Communist conspiracy.
1949.12.3	New anti-treason law passes National Assembly. No significant legal action against traitors
1951.2.14	Law eradicating the new anti-treason law enacted.

## Summary of SIC Results

- Under 700 cases for investigation opened (6 women) but very few sent to trial
- 1 sentenced to death (never carried out)
- 1 sentenced to life imprisonment (released 1950)
- 13 prison sentences of 1-2 years (all released by 1950)
- 18 denied civil rights