

May 22, 1980 Record of Policy Review Committee Meeting, 'Korea'

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Summary:

Officials from the US Department of State, the White House, the CIA, NSC, OSD, and JCS determine US policy toward South Korea in light of the events in Gwangju.

Credits:

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POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE

May 22, 1980

Time and Place: 4 p.m. - 5:15 p.m., White House Situation Room

Subject: Korea

Participants:

State
Secretary Edmund Muskie
(Chairman)
DEPSEC Warren Christopher
Richard Holbrooke, Secretary
for East Asian & Pacific
Affairs
Robert Rich, Director
Korea Desk,

White House
Zbigniew Brzezinski
David Aaron

NSC
Donald Gregg

OSD
Secretary Harold Brown
Nick Platt, Dep Asst Sec for
International Security
Affairs
David McGiffert, Asst Sec for
International Security

State Dept. review
completed

NSC RECOMMENDS RELEASE.
9/28/07

OSD review(s)
completed.

CIA

Admiral Stansfield Turner
John Holdridge, NIO for
Affairs
China and East Asia

JCS

General David Jones
Lt. General John Pustay, Asst
to the Chairman, JCS
General John Vessey, Vice Chief
of Staff for the Army

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

After a full discussion of the current situation in Korea there was general agreement that the first priority is the restoration of order in Kwangju by the Korean authorities with the minimum use of force necessary without laying the seeds for wide disorders later. Once order is restored, it was agreed that we must press the Korean Government, and the military in particular, to allow a greater degree of political freedom to evolve. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski summed up the approach: "in the short term support, in the longer term pressure for political evolution." (S)

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Review on May 22, 1986

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Secretary Muskie then asked that decisions be made on the following points:

1. Public statements. It was agreed that the statement of May 22 was sufficient for the time being. (U)
2. US posture toward the situation in Kwangju. It was agreed that we do not need to do more than we have done up to now. We have counselled moderation, but have not ruled out the use of force, should the Koreans need to employ it to restore order. (C)
3. Additional steps by US military. It was agreed that nothing additional needs to be done at this time. It was noted that the Koreans were pleased by the rapidity with which we had moved AWACS into the area. The current US state of alert re North Korea was judged correct. We are reviewing the location of the carrier Coral Sea, which is now north of the Philippines heading east. It may be desirable to redirect the Coral Sea towards the Sea of Japan. Secretary Muskie asked the Defense Department to take additional planning steps to prepare for "worst case scenarios" which could develop. Specifically, he asked that DOD prepare recommendations for what should be done if there is a pattern of spreading violence outside of Kwangju and, secondly, what the Defense Department would recommend if ROK redeployments to internal security duty continued to the point where the counter-North Korea mission of the joint command was endangered. (S)
4. Visits by US persons. The question of the visit by EX-IM Bank President John Moore was discussed. It was agreed to get Ambassador Gleysteen's opinion on that visit, and to make a final decision once Moore has reached Japan. The consensus of the group was that it might be a mistake at this time to send a negative signal to the Koreans by cancelling another visit. (A visit by Llewellyn of OPIC has already been cancelled.) (S)
5. What to do after order has been restored in Kwangju. It was agreed that what we do depends in large part on how the situation in Kwangju is resolved. If the situation there is handled well, with little loss of life, we can move quietly to apply pressure for more political evolution. If the situation in Kwangju involves large loss of life, the PRC will meet again to discuss measures to be taken. (S)
6. Post-Kwangju objectives. Secretary Muskie asked that thought be devoted to what we want to achieve in Korea, and how we go about achieving our longer-range goals. (C)

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It was further agreed that Ambassador Gleysteen should not be recalled at this time, and that no emissaries from Washington are needed at the moment. (C)

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