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January 5, 1976

Cable, American Embassy Seoul to the Secretary of State, 'ROK Nuclear Reprocessing'

Citation:

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Summary:

The American Ambassador to Korea voices his opinion that the U.S. can discourage the SOuth Korean nuclear program while avoiding confrontation and a "humiliating loss of face and prestige" for Park Chung Hee.

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NLF MR Case No. 94-146
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E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: MNUC, PARM, KS, CA, FR
SUBJECT: ROK NUCLEAR REPROCESSING

REF: A. SEOUL 9928, B. SEOUL 9929, C. SEOUL 9961, D. STATE 302043
E. STATE 299289, F. STATE 305630

1. SUMMARY: WHILE FULLY COGNIZANT OF CONCERNS SET FORTH REF F,
I NEVERTHELESS URGE RECONSIDERATION AND MODIFICATION OF INSTRUC-
TIONS IN REF F ON GROUNDS POTENTIAL GAINS ARE NOT COMMENSURATE
WITH RISKS INVOLVED AND POTENTIAL DISRUPTION TO OUR BASIC RE-
LATIONSHIP. NOR ARE TACTICS CONSISTENT WITH OUR LONGER TERM
INTERESTS IN KOREA. I AM CONVINCED THAT USG OBJECTIVE OF DIS-
COURAGING NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION BY BLOCKING REPROCESSING FACILITY
IN KOREA CAN BE ACHIEVED WITHOUT FORCING CONFRONTATION AND
HUMILIATING LOSS OF FACE AND PRESTIGE FOR PRESIDENT PARK. END
SUMMARY.

Section 3.4(b)(6) of E.O. 12958

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Section 3.4 (b)(6) of E.O. 12958

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Section 3.4 (b)(6) of E.O. 12958

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Section 3.4 (b)(6) of E.O. 12958

6. I THEREFORE PROPOSE FOLLOWING MODIFICATION OF INSTRUCTIONS AS SET FORTH REF E, PARA 4:

A. THE USG APPRECIATES AND WELCOMES ROKG DECISION TO RECONSIDER REPROCESSING ASPECT OF ITS COUTRACT WITH FRANCE;

B. WE ALSO APPRECIATE ROKG RECOGNITION OF SERIOUSNESS OUR OUR CONCERNS AND OF MAJOR BEARING THIS ISSUE HAS ON FUTURE OF OUR OVERALL RELATIONSHIP,

C. US PREFERENCE REMAINS FINAL CANCELLATION AT THIS TIME OF REPROCESSING CONTRACT,

D. FAILURE TO CANCEL CONTRACT UNTIL COMPTETION OF DISCUSSIONS WILL FURTHER AROUSE CONGRESSIONAL AND PUBLIC SUSPICIONS AS DEMONSTRATED BY MONDALE/PASTORE RESOLUTION. (APPRECIATE TEXT OF RESOLUTION SOONEST.) UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, USG WILL NOT SEEK CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL OF KORI II LOAN UNTIL REPROCESSING CONTRACT CANCELLED.

E. NEVERTHELESS, GIVEN ROKG CONFIDENCE IN OUR ABILITY TO ACHIEVE MUTUALLY SATISFACTORY AGREEMENT BASED ON MUTUAL TRUST, WE ARE PREPARED TO PROCEED WITH DISCUSSIONS ON NON-SENSITIVE NUCLEAR COOPERATION WITH OBJECTIVE OF REACHING EARLY AGREEMENT ON SCOPE OF COOPERATION WHERE FEASIBLE (E.G. DETAILS ON MULTINATIONAL FACILITY WOULD HAVE TO WAIT).

F. WE ARE THEREFORE PREPARED TO SEND AT EARLY DATE QUALIFIED USG PERSONNEL TO DISCUSS WITH GOKG THE POSITIVE ASPECTS OF FUTURE US-KOREAN PEACEFUL NUCLEAR COOPERATION AS LISTED PARA 2 REF D. WE DO NOT INTEND, HOWEVER, TO SEEK TO REPLACE NON-SENSITIVE NUCLEAR COOPERATION BETWEEN ROK AND FRANCE AND CANADA.

SNEIDER

~~SECRET~~