

December 10, 1975

US Department of State Cable, ROK Nuclear Reprocessing

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Summary:

The U.S. Ambassador to Korea Richard Sneider outlines follow up approaches in U.S. policy toward South Korea's planned purchase of a French reprocessing plant.

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MNUC FARM KS FR CA
SUBJECT: ROK NUCLEAR REPROCESSING

REF: A. STATE 285640 B. SEOUL 9440 C. SEOUL 9459

1. NOW THAT I HAVE MADE CALL ON PRIME MINISTER ON NUCLEAR RE-PROCESSING, I STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT PLANNED APPROACH ON THIS ISSUE TO AMBASSADOR HAHM IN WASHINGTON (PARA 4, REF A) BE MADE SOONEST SO THERE IS AMPLE TIME FOR HIS REPORT TO BE TRANSMITTED AND DIGESTED PRIOR TO ANY MEETING I MAY HAVE WITH PRESIDENT PARK NEXT WEEK. GIVEN SERIOUSNESS OF ISSUE AND HIGH LEVEL ROKS

INVOLVEMENT, CONVERSATION WITH HAHM SHOULD BE CONDUCTED AT HIGHEST POSSIBLE LEVEL.

2. CONVERSATION WITH PRIME MINISTER (REF B) INDICATES THAT TO BE EFFECTIVE OUR APPROACH MUST EMPHASIZE ADVERSE IMPACT ON OUR BROADER RELATIONSHIP WITH ROKS IF THEY PERSIST IN COMPLETING FRENCH REPROCESSING DEAL. THIS POINT IS REINFORCED BY INITIAL NEGATIVE REACTION TO APPROACH TO PRIMIN WHICH I RECEIVED FROM DEPUTY PRIMIN HAN THIS MORNING (REF C). THUS, IN APPROACH TO HAHM I BELIEVE WE MUST MAKE INDELIBLY CLEAR THAT FAR MORE THAN OUR NUCLEAR SUPPORT IS AT STAKE HERE, THAT IF ROKS PROCEED AS THEY HAVE INDICATED TO DATE WHOLE RANGE OF SECURITY AND POLITICAL RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN US AND ROK WILL BE AFFECTED,

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INCLUDING POTENTIAL FOR ADVERSE CONGRESSIONAL ACTION ON SECURITY ASSISTANCE FOR KOREA. WHILE NOT STINTING ON NEGATIVE FACTORS, I WOULD SUGGEST ALONG POSITIVE LINES ASKING ROK COOPERATION IN FOREGOING NATIONAL REPROCESSING IN INTEREST OF PRESERVING AND EVEN STRENGTHENING OUR RELATIONSHIP, A LINE I

INTEND TO TAKE WITH PRESIDENT PARK. WE SHOULD BY ALL MEANS REITERATE OTHER ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL ARGUMENTS WE HAVE MADE IN PAST BUT AS DEPARTMENT RECOGNIZES IN REF D THESE ARE NOT LIABLE AT THIS STAGE TO WEIGH HEAVILY IN ROK THINKING.

[3] Section 3.4(b)(6) of E.O. 12958

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