

**July 11, 1975**

**Draft US Department of State Cable on Approach to  
South Korea on French Reprocessing Plant**

**Citation:**

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<https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/114623>

**Summary:**

A follow up report for Henry Kissinger on the state of U.S. policy toward South Korea's purchase of a French reprocessing plant.

**Credits:**

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**Contents:**

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MEMORANDUM

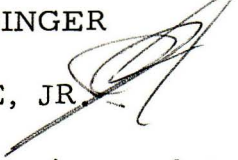
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## NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

~~SECRET~~ GDSACTION

July 11, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: SECRETARY KISSINGER

FROM: JOHN A. FROEBE, JR. 

SUBJECT: Draft State Cable on Approach to South Korea on French Reprocessing Plant

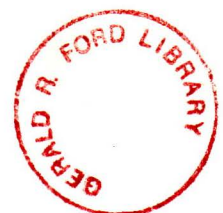
(Tab A)

The NSC memorandum of July 8/on the above subject from Jan Lodal and Dave Elliott was not cleared by Smyser's office. I understand that Jan carried the memorandum with him on your aircraft. We had joint action on this subject and would like herewith to add our comment.

As the Lodal/Elliott memorandum points out, the issue is whether we should consider the various international controls on proliferation toward which we are working adequate in all cases. If so, we should not object to any arrangement between suppliers and client states that accepts these controls. It is quite possible that the proposed French sale of a reprocessing plant to the ROK could meet the general standards we are seeking. The memorandum, however, did not underscore sufficiently the special considerations that pertain in regard to the proliferation question on the Korean Peninsula. If Korea begins to build a reprocessing plant, it will be widely assumed that it is seriously working on a nuclear weapons program. This perception would be potentially destabilizing in all of Northeast Asia. North Korea would certainly press its allies for a similar capability, and both China and the Soviet Union would see potential nuclear threats to their own territory. Perhaps most important such a development might possibly tip the balance on proliferation in Japan. Consequently, the Korean case would seem to warrant special bilateral action with the ROK, in addition to the controls we are contemplating in the international regulatory mechanisms.

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4.

MR 94-144, #16 NSC Lt 4/25/95  
By KBA NARA, Date 6/13/95



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The Lodal/Elliott memorandum notes that an alternative to the approach to the ROK authorized in the draft State cable is to wait for the Korean response to our Aide Memoire. This Aide Memoire which we presented to the ROK some weeks ago interprets our Agreement for Cooperation as providing for an effective U. S. veto right over reprocessing of fuel from U. S. -built reactors. It should be noted, however, that a positive ROK response to our Aide Memoire would be a verbal undertaking similar to its accession to the NPT, and would do little to mitigate the reaction in Northeast Asia if the ROK then proceeded with the purchase and construction of a reprocessing plant.

We recommend that you approve forwarding the State instruction cable to Seoul.

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