

March 21, 1973

**Letter, Ahmet H. Ozbudun to C.V. Narasimhan,
"Briefing by the ROK Foreign Minister"**

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Summary:

Ozbudun sends Narasimhan a letter containing a briefing by the ROK Foreign Minister on the issue of security incidents, the German example and Korea, South-North dialogue, and policy of the ROK at the United Nations. Second session of the North-South co-ordination committee and commander of the Capital Garrison command being arrested for a coup d'etat attempt are also mentioned.

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cc - Mr. Kutakov

UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION FOR THE INVESTIGATION AND RECONCILIATION OF KOREA
CONFIDENTIALCONFIDENTIAL: No. 187

16 March 1973

Dear CONFIDENTIAL

21 March 1973

The following topics may well be of particular interest to you:

REVIEW OF THE TWO KOREAN INCIDENTS

On 16 March, the UN Foreign Minister welcomed Mr. H. Ozbudun, Principal Secretary of the Government of the Republic of Korea, also answering questions on the particular points. He provided the Commission with a brief concerning the two incidents near Cheju Island and the UN respectively (17 March 1973).

Dear Ahmet,

I received your confidential letter of 16 March, No. 187, on various topics and have taken note of its contents.

Presented incidents, the Minister stressed that the reason his Government preferred to keep backward regarding the North Korean side. I have no objection to your home leave plans. I fully affecting the South Korean side. The incidents were presented to the Commission.

I presume that you have checked them out with Field Service.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

C.V. Narasimhan
Chef de Cabinet

THE KOREAN SIDE AND THE UN

The Minister emphasized that the Korean and German cases were very much different and that especially the UN membership of the German side could not be applied to Korea. The Minister then offered arguments on the Korean side similar to that conveyed in my letters of 11 and 12 March.

Mr. Ahmet H. Ozbudun

Principal Secretary

UNCURK

Seoul, Korea

Mr. C.V. Narasimhan
Chef de Cabinet
United Nations
New York

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(UNCURK)CONFIDENTIAL: No. 187

16 March 1973

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Dear Mr. Narasimhan,

The following topics this week might be of particular interest to you:

BRIEFING BY THE ROK FOREIGN MINISTER

On 12 March, the ROK Foreign Minister briefed UNCURK Representatives at a working-luncheon, also answering questions by the participants. Meanwhile, he provided the Commission with a text concerning two recent security incidents near Cheju Island and the DMZ respectively (Please see attached).

SECURITY INCIDENTS

On the aforementioned incidents, the Minister stressed that the reason his Government preferred to "bend backward" regarding the North Korean infractions was to preclude the possibility of adversely affecting the South-North dialogue. He added, however, that the incidents were proof of the continued danger of conflict on the Peninsula and meanwhile served to demonstrate the lack of good faith on the part of Pyongyang. [However, one source subsequently intimated that in the case of the DMZ incident, the ROK side was not "entirely innocent". In fact, yesterday, prior to the morning meeting of the Co-ordinating Committee in Pyongyang, the North side attributed its firing at the DMZ to "peeping" by the ROK soldiers "into the other's house", namely spying on the DPRK. Moreover, when the Commission requested information on the incident, initially the ROK side and the UNC respectively asked us to obtain the information from the other.]

THE GERMAN EXAMPLE AND KOREA

The Minister emphasized that the Korean and German cases were very much different and that especially the UN membership of the Germans could not be applied to Korea. The Minister then offered argumentation in this regard similar to that conveyed in my letters of 5 January and 12 January 1973, respectively entitled "THE GERMAN PRECEDENT AND THE MATTER OF DOUBLE UN MEMBERSHIP FOR KOREA" and "STATEMENT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL RELATING TO KOREA, AND ITS IMPACT".

Mr. C.V. Narasimhan
Chef de Cabinet
United Nations
New York

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He added that, in fact, the example set by the Koreans in their mutual approach to unification had been regarded by the opposition party in the Federal Republic of Germany as an attractive precedent worthy of emulation.

SOUTH-NORTH DIALOGUE

The Minister sounded to be less pessimistic than ever before in his reference to prospects of the Korean dialogue. However, he strongly cautioned against undue speed, over-ambition and excessive optimism in the South-North approach to dialogue, detente and unification. He expressed the belief that in the Second Formal Session of the Co-ordinating Committee (just ended today), the South would probably propose the formation of two of the Sub-Committees contemplated earlier by the two sides, respectively on "Economic" and "Social and Cultural Affairs". He reiterated his earlier opposition to immediate political discussions with the North which he said must await agreement on humanitarian and non-political issues respectively at the Red Cross and the Co-ordinating Committee levels. Agreement on and implementation concerning these issues must precede political talks in that this was the only way to ease tensions on the Peninsula and provide viable confidence to the two sides to proceed with the political talks. The Minister indicated that the South and North had agreed to proceed first with issues that were easier to resolve before approaching difficult problems.

POLICY OF THE ROK AT THE UNITED NATIONS

The Minister strongly reiterated his standing preference for the deferment of Korean items at the forthcoming session of the General Assembly. He stressed that this was required by the current North-South dialogue for its further progress and successful consummation. He had no doubt whatsoever that other UN members, including those from the "other camp", and particularly the People's Republic of China, would normally prefer deferment, first to avoid confrontation with the US; second, to preclude acrimonious debate which might hurt the Korean dialogue; and third, to retain UN Forces in Korea lest the withdrawal of American troops might strengthen any prospects of a Sino-Soviet clash. The Minister firmly believed that the real reason why the "other side" opposed deferment was the fact that the proposal for deferment had been originated by the ROK. He pointed out that, earlier in the past, it had been this "other side" which had opposed any UN deliberations on Korea.

The Minister, however, said that while deferment might not be the best policy always, it was so this year. Intimating some difficulty in persuading all allies concerning another postponement, he said that the ROK would maintain a policy of flexibility and consider other proposals as may be offered. He again appeared to circumvent the definition of "flexibility", adding that Secretary Rogers and he had agreed

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on looking into other contingencies although the former believed deferment to be the best available policy. The Minister thought that there was no particular urgency between now and July to set a definitive policy vis-à-vis the United Nations.

If deliberations were to be held at the next General Assembly, he would be apprehensive regarding the possible participation of the DPRK in the discussions. However, he had no doubt that such deliberations would not bring any change in the UN posture on Korea. There was a strong majority to maintain the political and military presences of the Organization.

The Minister then differentiated between the two presences, stressing that while UNCURK had been created by the General Assembly, the United Nations Command had been formed by the Security Council. In the case of the latter, it was unthinkable for the Council to remove UN Forces from Korea or for that matter rescind the UN emblem afforded to these Forces. The Minister was absolutely sure that, if need be (which was not likely), the US would exercise its veto against such eventualities.

SECOND SESSION OF THE NORTH-SOUTH
CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

As you are probably informed by news dispatches emanating from Pyongyang today, there are indications that the two meetings of the Second Session of the Co-ordinating Committee held there for three days encountered, what appear to be, serious stumbling-blocks.

From what is available here at the time of closing my pouch, there was a flare-up between the Co-Chairmen just before the first of the aforesaid two meetings, which was in fact witnessed by attending newsmen. During the heated exchanges, reference was even made to the two security incidents indicated above, which had been already taken up through the "Hot Line". The first meeting lasted only half an hour, and the second, just over two hours. Reportedly, there will be, for the first time, no joint-communiqué issued after the session. Nor has President Kim Il Sung, contrary to anticipation, received the Southern delegation.

According to reports, the basic disagreement is the following: The South side insists on proceeding with the dialogue gradually -- first taking up humanitarian and non-political issues, one by one, before embarking on political (or military) talks. However, even the seeming concession by the South to approach humanitarian and non-political talks simultaneously (in the past the South had persisted that even these levels should be divorced and taken up separately, the latter after the conclusion of the former), and to discuss economic and social-cultural exchanges, was not acceptable to the North. The South evidently urged such exchanges, first on the grounds that only their successful implementation would create the adequate sense of

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mutual trust and security requisite for deliberation on political (or military) matters.

It appears meanwhile that the North is bent upon concluding a political agreement in the form of a south-north peace treaty, to enforce military outbacks as a prerequisite to other talks. It claims that no meaningful negotiation could be held before removing all elements conducive to continued tension and the prospect of military confrontation.

Personally, I tend to agree with those who feel that the disagreement between the two sides are more fundamental and that the reasons adduced by them, which are real, do not reflect the whole picture.

Some observers go further and quite cynically persist in attributing ulterior motives to one side or the other, and most of them to both sides. I find it difficult to agree with their prognosis that neither side is quite ready to undertake seriously the resolution of colossal problems; that each suspects the other resolutely; that neither can afford to announce to its population the abandonment of the dialogue which therefore must go on, at least on paper; that the South is exclusively interested in preserving the status quo in the UN Korean posture, and hence, in obtaining further deferment on the strength of the dialogue; and finally, that the North is solely motivated by first denying the South its goal of postponement by virtue of a progressing dialogue, and secondly of attaining further recognition by and diplomatic relations with a growing number of States, thereby strengthening the separate and sovereign existence of the DPRK. These observers feel that consequently, both sides must maintain the myth of the dialogue; pay lip service to it; but somehow prevent the other from reaping a better harvest than that attained by itself.

The foregoing arguments may hold some water in some respects, to some extent; however, to deny the two sides any sincerity in the avowed pursuit, through dialogue, of detente and some form of eventual unification, appears to be erroneous and unrealistic. Personally, I feel persuaded that the apprehension regarding "the fast moving international situation"; the fear of isolation and possible abandonment by allies (in the case of the DPRK, the additional concern over the Sino-Soviet cleavage); the dread of perpetual division or unification, dictated by Big Powers from the outside; and the very real danger of deliberate or untoward warfare on the Peninsula appear to have conjointly forced the two Koreans into dialogue. The worst diagnosis may be that despite their pronouncements to the contrary, each side might still entertain the ambition of attaining detente and unification on its own terms and under its perpetual dominance.

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COMMANDER OF THE CAPITAL GARRISON COMMAND

An unconfirmed rumour states that one of the most powerful persons in the ROK and a close friend of President Park Chung Hee -- Major General Yun Pil Yong -- Commander of the Capital Garrison Command -- was placed under house arrest.

One "explanation" was that the Commander had allegedly attempted a "pro-government coup d'etat" aimed at replacing Cabinet Ministers with Generals of the Armed Forces. Some regarded him to be an arch-opponent of Premier Kim Jong Pil.

A second explanation said that the Commander had insisted that the President recommend his list of about twenty Generals among the 73 persons elected to the National Assembly by the National Conference for Unification, and that the President had only included two of the Generals.

A third version attributed the house arrest to a power struggle between top army or security leaders.

A final story is that General Yun and yet another most powerful man in the ROK, Major General Kang Chang Sung -- Commander of the Army Security Command (and formerly Deputy Assistant to CIA Director Lee Hu Rak) -- did not get along well.

General Yun is now said to have been removed from his post and retired from the Army.

SESSION OF UNCURK IN JAPAN

The Commission will hold its session in Tokyo as scheduled, between 19 and 20 March. I am to return to Seoul on the 21st.

MY HOME LEAVE

I am hoping very much to take my home leave as of 2 April and to return around the end of May.

In accordance with past practice, the Political Affairs Officer, Mr. Shail Upadhyaya, will be Officer-in-Charge of UNCURK pending my return.

Mr. George A. Humphries, Assistant Custodian of UNMCK, will become Acting Custodian until he is succeeded by the incoming Assistant Custodian, Mr. James Whyte.

I hope all this will meet with your approval

* * *

With warmest regards,

Sincerely yours,
AHMET H. OZBUDUN
AHMET H. OZBUDUN
Principal Secretary

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P.S.

ROK REFERENCE TO CHINA
(Latest Development - 18:50)

The ROK Foreign Ministry today, in an official statement, offered to negotiate its dispute with the People's Republic of China over jurisdiction with respect to oil-drilling operations and other sea-bed resources along the coastal areas in the Yellow Sea. It said that the area in question was under ROK jurisdiction under International Law.

It is noteworthy that the ROK referred to mainland China as the "People's Republic of China" for the first time in an official statement made by the Foreign Ministry.

Meanwhile, there had been cordial and conciliatory references by ROK officials to the Peking Government in recent months, however, as "Communist" or "Red" China.

J.M.T.