

CONFIDENTIAL

Seoul, 15 January 1971

Dear Mr. Narasimhan,

A preliminary analysis of President Park Chung Hee's annual press conference held recently would reveal that the predominance of economic power still remains the formula through which he views the issues of national security and unification. In reiterating this view, he seems to have echoed the same line which had been followed by Japan during the post-war era. The President has given in that press conference some interesting figures which supported this view. Declaring that last year's most important achievement was the attainment of one billion dollars export goal, he announced the introduction of the third five-year economic plan which, he hopes, will achieve the export target of 3.5 billion dollars, an average export increase of 22.8%.

Stemming from all these is the awareness on his part that economic growth is the major goal of his administration's policy. He also seemed to be applying this formula on political issues. For instance, on the question of unification of Korea, he has again reiterated the statement made last August for peaceful competition between North and South Korea, but implied that, once his country attains a high degree of economic development, the sheer weight of its achievement could create favourable conditions for the unification of the two Koreas.

With regard to the overall security situation in Asia, the President appeared to be at variance with the current general thinking that no power vacuum would be necessarily created in East Asia as a result of the U.S. military disengagement in Viet-Nam and South Korea. He advanced the view, though, that Asians have not yet reached the stage where they can take up defence responsibilities on their own. He also sounded doubtful

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Mr. C.V. Narasimhan
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whether Japan could fill in this vacuum in view of its domestic political situation. He added that the emergence of China as a superpower in Asia has introduced a new element in the Asian situation and that it is reasonable to believe that the future security of the Korean peninsula may depend on the kind of attitude Communist China will adopt in this regard.

With warmest personal regards,

Yours sincerely,

Zouhair Kuzbari

Zouhair Kuzbari
Principal Secretary