

January 5, 1976

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

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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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PAGE 01 SEUL 00026 0508357

17
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E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: MNUC, PARM, KS, CA, FR
SUBJECT: ROK NUCLEAR REPROCESSING

REF: A. SEUL 9928, B. SEUL 9929, C. SEUL 9961, D. STATE 382043
E. STATE 299269, F. STATE 325630

SUMMARY: WHILE FULLY COGNIZANT OF CONCERNS SET FORTH REF F,
NEVERTHELESS URGE RECONSIDERATION AND MODIFICATION OF INSTRUCTIONS
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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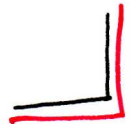
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PAGE 22 SECUL 03025 052835Z



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

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PAGE 04 00000 00000 0500357

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 CONTRACT WITH FRANCE;

B. WE ALSO APPRECIATE ROKG RECOGNITION OF SERIOUSNESS 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 COMPLETION 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 KORT 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 MULTI-NATIONAL 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 C. WE DO NOT INTEND, HOWEVER, TO SEEK TO REPLACE NON-SENSITIVE NUCLEAR COOPERATION BETWEEN ROK AND FRANCE AND CANADA.

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