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SUBJECT: REPORT TO PRESIDENT OF SECDEF DISCUSSIONS IN KOREA
 1. (S) SECRETARY BROWN ASKED THAT I PASS TO YOU THE TEXT OF MESSAGE SENT TO THE PRESIDENT REPORTING DISCUSSIONS IN KOREA. TEXT FOLLOWS:

SUBJECT: MY DISCUSSION IN KOREA (U)
 2. (S) SUMMARY. THE US-ROK SECURITY CONSULTATIVE MEETING CAME OFF VERY SMOOTHLY. NO CONTENTIOUS ISSUES SURFACED ON DEFENSE MATTERS. I BELIEVE THE DISCUSSIONS SERVED TO CONSOLIDATE A US/ROK SECURITY RELATIONSHIP WHICH IS IN GENERALLY GOOD SHAPE. WHILE THE IMPOSITION OF MARTIAL LAW IN PUSAN PROVIDED A DISCORDANT NOTE, DISCUSSION OF THE INTERNAL POLITICAL SITUATION WITH PRESIDENT PARK WENT SOMEWHAT BETTER THAN I HAD EXPECTED. END SUMMARY.

3. (S) MY EXCHANGE WITH MINISTER OF DEFENSE RO WENT ACCORDING TO FORM. I STRONGLY REAFFIRMED OUR COMMITMENT TO ROK SECURITY IN ORDER TO LAY TO REST CONCERNS GENERATED BY SWING STRATEGY LEAKS, AND BY MIKE MANSFIELD'S RECENT COMMENTS SUGGESTING THAT KOREA LIES OUTSIDE THE US DEFENSE PERIMETER. I INFORMED RO OF OUR PLANS TO WITHDRAW SOME 1526 U.S. MILITARY SUPPORT PERSONNEL BY THE END OF CY 1980. I URGED HIM TO SUSTAIN AND GRADUALLY TO EXPAND THE ROK'S DEFENSE EFFORT AS WARRANTED BY ASSESSMENTS OF THE THREAT AND AS THE ROK'S ECONOMIC SITUATION PERMITS. I EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR ROK ACTIONS TO FURNISH US VARIOUS FACILITIES AND ENCOURAGED RO AND GENERAL WICKHAM (CINC US FORCES KOREA) TO DEVISE ADDITIONAL JOINT DEFENSE IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS TO SUPPORT OUR FORCES HERE.

4. (S) RO BRIEFED ME ON ROK PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING ITS 1ST FORCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN. HE INDICATED PRESIDENT PARK WILL SOON APPROVE A 2D PLAN (RUNNING FROM 1982-86) WHICH WILL CONCENTRATE ON IMPROVING ROK GROUND FORCE CAPABILITIES AND ENHANCING ROK MOBILIZATION CAPABILITY.

5. (S) RO AND PARK ESPECIALLY WELCOMED YOUR APPROVAL OF THE ROK REQUEST TO CO-ASSEMBLE F-5S IN KOREA AND INDICATIONS THAT WE ARE PLANNING TO TAKE VARIOUS STEPS (E.G., DEPLOYMENT OF AN A-10 SQUADRON TO KOREA IN THE EARLY 80'S) TO AUGMENT OUR COMBAT CAPABILITIES HERE.

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20 OCT 1979

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RO ASSURED ME THAT THE ROKS WOULD BE PREPARED TO CONSIDER FINANCING THE A-10 BEDDOWN FACILITIES AS WELL AS TO PAY CERTAIN SUPPORT COSTS. WHILE REAFFIRMING INTEREST IN PROCURING F-16'S, RO DID NOT PRESS FOR THE SIGNING OF AN LOA THIS YEAR. I EXPRESSED OUR WILLINGNESS TO CONSIDER SPECIFIC FORMS OF COOPERATION TO HELP THE ROK DEVELOP SURFACE-TO-SURFACE MISSILES ON THE BASIS OF UNDERSTANDINGS CONCERNING STRICT LIMITS ON RANGE AND TECHNICAL SOPHISTICATION OF SUCH MISSILES SET FORTH IN CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN GENERAL WICKHAM AND RO. RO ASSURED ME HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD COMPLY WITH THESE UNDERSTANDINGS.

6. (S) RO EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT RECENT CONGRESSIONAL CUTS OF FUNDS FOR JOINT EXERCISES, URGED CONTINUED US PROVISIONS OF SUBSTANTIAL FMS CREDITS, SOUGHT MORE EXPEDITIOUS HANDLING OF ROK REQUESTS TO SELL SOME LOCALLY-PRODUCED ARMS TO THIRD COUNTRIES, AND OFFERED POHANG AS A BASE FOR DEPLOYING P3C PLANES FOR ASW MISSIONS. I ASSURED HIM OF OUR INTEREST IN AND INTENTION TO SUSTAIN JOINT EXERCISES. I INDICATED THAT WE WOULD FURNISH FMS CREDITS BUT PROBABLY AT DIMINISHED LEVELS, REMINDED HIM THAT WE ARE REQUIRED TO PROCESS THIRD COUNTRY ARMS SALES REQUESTS ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS, BUT WOULD TRY TO OVERCOME ADMINISTRATIVE DELAYS IN PROCESSING SUCH REQUESTS, AND AGREED TO CONSIDER ADDITIONAL TEMPORARY DEPLOYMENTS OF P3S TO POHANG FOR TRAINING PURPOSES.

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SUBJECT: REPORT TO PRESIDENT OF SECDEF DISCUSSIONS IN KOREA

7. (S) PRESIDENT PARK EXPRESSED GREAT SATISFACTION WITH YOUR ADJUSTMENT IN OUR TROOP WITHDRAWAL PLAN AND OUR RESPECTIVE EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE LOCAL BALANCE OF FORCES. I EXPLAINED TO PARK THE SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF MY PLANNED TRIP TO CHINA, SOUGHT TO PLACE RECENT REVELATIONS ABOUT OUR "SWING STRATEGY" IN PERSPECTIVE, AND REPEATED THAT OUR COMMITMENT TO THE DEFENSE OF THE ROK REMAINS. ASSURED HIM THAT WE ARE TAKING STEPS TO COUNTER SOVIET EFFORTS TO PROJECT ITS MILITARY POWER MORE VISIBLY INTO THE NORTHEAST ASIAN REGION.

8. (S) AMBASSADOR GLEYSTEN AND I WERE MILDLY ENCOURAGED BY PRESIDENT PARK'S CALM REACTION DURING OUR PRIVATE MEETING ON KOREAN DOMESTIC POLITICAL SITUATION. AFTER HANDING HIM YOUR LETTER AND REVIEWING ITS CONTENTS, I NOTED THAT IT WAS NOT OUR INTENTION TO ALLOW THE CURRENT SITUATION TO AFFECT OUR SECURITY TIES WITH THE ROK, BUT AS A PRACTICAL MATTER IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR US IF THERE WERE NO RETURN TO THE MORE LIBERAL TREND ASSOCIATED WITH YOUR VISIT TO KOREA. THE AMBASSADOR EXPLAINED WHY MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, INCLUDING CLOSE FRIENDS OF THE ROK, FELT SO STRONGLY ABOUT EXPULSION FROM THE ASSEMBLY OF THE OPPOSITION LEADER. GLEYSTEN URGED THAT PARK TAKE ACTIONS WHICH WOULD REASSURE THOSE WHO FEARED A WIDESPREAD CRACKDOWN, AND WOULD ALSO OPEN UP THE POSSIBILITY FOR COMPROMISE WITH THE OPPOSITION PARTY. WE COMPLIMENTED THE PRESIDENT ON THE DECISION TODAY TO RELEASE A NUMBER OF PEOPLE HELD UNDER EMERGENCY MEASURE 9 BECAUSE IT INDICATED AN INTENT TO LIMIT THE HARMFUL EFFECTS OF MARTIAL LAW IN THE CITY OF PUSAN.

9. (S) THE BURDEN OF PRESIDENT PARK'S RESPONSE WAS THAT HE WAS PREPARED TO ACCEPT PRIVATE AND INFORMAL ADVICE FROM THE U.S. ON DOMESTIC KOREAN MATTERS, BUT COULD NOT DO SO IF THE U.S. PUBLICLY CRITICIZED HIS GOVERNMENT BY STRONG STATEMENTS AND PUBLIC ACTIONS SUCH AS CALLING BACK THE AMBASSADOR. HE SAID THAT OUR ACTIONS NOT ONLY EMBOLDENED THE OPPOSITION TO DEFY THE

GOVERNMENT BUT ALSO THREATENED TO PROVOKE A POPULAR BACKLASH AGAINST THE U.S. FOR DICTATING TO KOREA ON WHAT ARE OBVIOUSLY DOMESTIC MATTERS. AT THE SAME TIME, PARK ACKNOWLEDGED THAT RECENT GOVERNMENT MEASURES MIGHT HAVE BEEN TOO HARSH AND HE IMPLIED THAT IF WE GIVE HIM ENOUGH RUNNING ROOM HE WOULD TRY TO AVOID EXTREME ACTIONS.

10. (U) END OF TEXT - WARM REGARDS.

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SSO NOTE: DELIVER DURING NCRMAL WORKING HOURS.
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National Security Archive,
Suite 701, Gelman Library, The George Washington University,
2130 H Street, NW, Washington, D.C., 20037,
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