

RELEASE IN PART B6

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INCOMING TELEGRAM

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ROME 10207

DISSENT CHANNEL

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: KOR

SUBJECT: U.S. SECURITY POLICY TOWARD KOREA

FROM

1. THIS MAY NOT BE APPROPRIATE FOR THE DISSENT CHANNEL BECAUSE THE COMMENTS ARE ADDRESSED TO OFFICIAL STATEMENTS AND PRESS REPORTS ISSUED ELSEWHERE, WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE OF THE FULL POLICY DELIBERATIONS INVOLVED. AS THE OFFICER WHO HAS SPENT THE LONGEST TIME WORKING ON KOREAN POLITICAL SECURITY MATTERS, U.S. ARMY MILITARY GOVERNMENT 1946-1948, DEPARTMENT WORK ON KOREA 1974-1959 AND 1962-1963, HOWEVER, I FEEL CONSTRAINED TO CALL ATTENTION TO SOME KEY POLICY CONSIDERATIONS THAT I FEAR MAY BE LOST SIGHT OF IN THE CURRENT ARGUMENTS ABOUT A SCHEDULED WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. GROUND FORCES FROM KOREA.

2. THE KEY POINT IS NOT THE PRESENCE OF U.S. FORCES PER SE BUT THE CLARITY OF THE U.S. COMMITMENT TO DEFEND SOUTH KOREA AGAINST ANY POSSIBLE RENewed AGGRESSION. THE PREPONDERANCE OF SOUTH KOREAN POPULATION AND ECONOMIC STRENGTH OVER NORTH KOREA, AND THE RELATIVELY EVEN

MILITARY BALANCE BETWEEN THEM ALSO ARE LARGELY IRRELEVANT, HAVING EXISTED EVEN AT THE TIME OF 1953. IT IS NOT SO MUCH TO NORTH KOREA THAT THE SIGNALS OF OUR COMMITMENT MUST BE CLEAR AS IT IS TO CHINA AND THE SOVIET UNION, WITHOUT WHOSE INVOLVEMENT NORTH KOREAN AGGRESSION COULD NOT HAVE TAKEN PLACE AND WOULD BE UNLIKELY IN THE FUTURE. AND IT IS NOT ONLY SOUTH KOREA THAT IS AT STAKE, BUT ALSO JAPAN, ONE OF WHOSE OLD LEADERS APTLY HAVING POINTED OUT THAT KOREA IS A DAGGER AIMED AT THE HEART OF JAPAN.

3. THE PRESENCE OF U.S. GROUND FORCES IS NOT A PERMANENT OR IMPUTABLE NECESSITY, BUT THE IMPLICATIONS OF THEIR WITHDRAWAL SHOULD BE HANDLED CAREFULLY. THE NORTH KOREAN AGGRESSION OF 1950 FOLLOWED ONE YEAR AFTER THE WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. MILITARY FORCES, AND AFTER STATEMENTS OF U.S. FOREIGN POLICY AND CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS HAD MISLED NORTH KOREA, THE SOVIET UNION AND COMMUNIST CHINA INTO BELIEVING THAT SOUTH KOREA HAD BEEN PLACED OUTSIDE OUR PERIMETER OF DEFENSE. THE OBVIOUS PSYCHOLOGICAL AND POLICY FACTOR TO CONSIDER NOW IS WHETHER AFTER THE COMMUNIST TAKE-OVER IN VIET-NAM AND OUR CHANGES OF RELATIONS WITH CHINA, A WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. FORCES FROM KOREA MIGHT NORTH KOREA, CHINA AND THE SOVIET UNION TO BELIEVE THAT OUR DEFENSE COMMITMENT TO SOUTH KOREA AND JAPAN HAS CHANGED.

4. OF EVEN GREATER IMPORTANCE THAN THE PRESENCE OF U.S. FORCES IS THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECLARATION OF THE SIXTEEN AT THE TIME OF THE CONCLUSION OF THE ARMISTICE IN 1953, IN WHICH WE AND THE OTHER COUNTRIES WHO HAD CONTRIBUTED FORCES TO THE UN MILITARY ACTION IN KOREA DECLARED THAT IF THE ARMISTICE WERE BROKEN WE WOULD RESPOND PROMPTLY AND THAT IT PROBABLY WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE TO CONFINE THE HOSTILITIES TO KOREA. THIS WAS CLEARLY A WARNING OF NUCLEAR WAR RESPONSE BY THE UNITED STATES.

BELIEVE IS A GRAVE ERROR, PARTICULARLY AT THE SAME TIME WE ARE ANNOUNCING A WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. GROUND FORCES. THE THREAT OF NUCLEAR RESPONSE SHOULD IN MY OPINION BE KEPT OPEN.

5. I WOULD SUGGEST THAT FORMER SECRETARY OF STATE RUSH BE CONSULTED, PARTICULARLY ON THE ISSUE OF THE DECLARATION OF THE SIXTEEN AND ITS IMPLICATIONS. IN THE TRUMAN ADMINISTRATION, HE WAS ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR UN AFFAIRS AND WAS PERSONALLY FAMILIAR WITH THESE DECISIONS. I PARTICIPATED IN DISCUSSIONS OF THESE ISSUES WITH HIM LATER, IN 1954, WHEN HE WAS SECRETARY OF STATE. GARDNER

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ROUTINE ROME

DISSENT CHANNEL

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR; KS

SUBJECT: US SECURITY POLICY TOWARDS KOREA

REF: ROME 10207

FOR [] FROM KREISBERG, ACTING DIRECTOR S/P

THIS WILL ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF YOUR DISSENT CHANNEL

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MESSAGE ON US SECURITY POLICY TOWARD KOREA. ALAN ROMBERG OF THE POLICY PLANNING STAFF HAS BEEN NAMED COORDINATOR IN CHARGE OF A SUBSTANTIVE REPLY. IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE STIPULATED DISTRIBUTION FOR DISSENT CHANNEL MESSAGES YOUR MESSAGE HAS BEEN CIRCULATED TO THE OFFICES OF THE SECRETARY, THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, AND THE CHAIRMAN OF THE OPEN FORUM, AS WELL AS THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR

EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC AFFAIRS AND THE DIRECTOR OF THE BUREAU FOR POLITICAL MILITARY AFFAIRS. WE COMMEND YOUR USE OF THE DISSENT CHANNEL AND WILL REPLY AS PROMPTLY AS POSSIBLE TO THE VIEWS YOU HAVE SUBMITTED. YY

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Department of State

OUTGOING
TELEGRAM ✓

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ONY-00 /003 R

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE STATE 191351

DISSENT CHANNEL

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MARR, KS, US

SUBJECT: U.S. SECURITY POLICY TOWARDS KOREA

REF: ROME 10207

FROM S/P DIRECTOR LAKE FOR

B6

1. MY RESPONSE HAS BEEN DELAYED IN ANTICIPATION THAT ADMINISTRATION POLICY, WHICH IS BASED ON MANY OF THE SAME CONCERNS YOU HIGHLIGHT, WOULD BECOME INCREASINGLY EXPLICIT, AS IT HAS, IN THE PERIOD LEADING UP TO THE SECURITY CONSULTATIVE MEETING (SCM) RECENTLY CONCLUDED IN SEOUL.
2. IN PARTICULAR, CLARITY OF THE US COMMITMENT TO DEFEND THE ROK AGAINST AGGRESSION WAS EVIDENT IN PRESIDENT CARTER'S LETTER TO PRESIDENT PARK. IN ADDITION, SECRETARY OF DEFENSE BROWN MADE EXPLICIT REFERENCE TO US NUCLEAR FORCE PROTECTION OF THE ROK IN REMARKS TO THE PRESS FOLLOWING THE SCM. COPIES OF PRESIDENTIAL LETTER AND BROWN STATEMENT POUCHED TO YOU.
3. PLANNED WITHDRAWALS, OF COURSE, COVER ONLY GROUND COMBAT FORCES, AND USG STATEMENTS AND ACTIONS HAVE MADE CLEAR OUR INTENTION TO LIVE UP TO OUR TREATY COMMITMENTS. THE PRC AND USSR ARE WELL AWARE OF THESE FACTS, AND NORTH KOREAN REACTION HAS REVEALED THAT THEY, TOO, HAVE RECEIVED THE MESSAGE.
4. A REVIEW UNDERTAKEN SEVERAL YEARS AGO INDICATED THAT ATTEMPTS TO INVOKE THE "DECLARATION OF SIXTEEN" WOULD NOT BE PROMISING. IN ANY CASE, THE COMMITMENTS CITED ABOVE SHOULD PROVIDE ADEQUATE ASSURANCES.
5. I COMMEND YOUR INITIATIVE IN USING THE DISSENT CHANNEL. IN THIS CASE, IT APPEARS WE ARE ALL ON THE SAME WAVE-LENGTH. CHRISTOPHER