

EXCISE

TEXT OF TELEGRAM 79SEOUL 016750

ADP945

PAGE 01 SEOUL 16750 01 OF 02 020928Z
ACTION EA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADS-00 L-01 H-01 INR-05 PM-03 PA-01
SP-02 HA-02 ACDA-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00
NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 OMB-01 /047 W
-----100396 020937Z /21

O 020900Z NOV 79
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2056
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

SECTION 01 OF 02 SEOUL 16750

LIMDIS

EO 12958: RDS-4 11/1/89 (CLARK, WILLIAM) OR-P
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, PEPR, KS, US
SUBJECT: WIDESPREAD APPREHENSION ABOUT A POSSIBLE
RETURN TO MILITARY RULE UNLESS THE AMERICANS
STOP IT

REF: (A) SEOUL 16583, (B) SEOUL 16560
1. ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY: WE HAVE SPOKEN TO A NUMBER OF POLITICALLY-AWARE KOREANS SINCE PRESIDENT PARK'S DEATH. MOST OF THESE PEOPLE ARE OPPOSITION POLITICIANS OR DISSIDENTS BUT SOME ARE PRO-GOVERNMENT. THEIR VIEWS DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT POPULAR OPINION. THE FEELING IS STRONG IN THIS OPPOSITION-ORIENTED GROUP THAT PRESIDENT PARK'S DEATH WAS THE RESULT OF A COUP ATTEMPT, ONE IN WHICH THE AMERICANS MAY HAVE BEEN INVOLVED. PEOPLE THINK THAT THE MILITARY, HAVING ACHIEVED POWER, WILL NOT GIVE IT UP EASILY. OUR SAMPLING OF PRO-GOVERNMENT POLITICIANS SUGGESTS THEY ARE DRIFTING WITHOUT THEIR LEADER, BUT SOME ARE CLEARLY WILLING, OR EVEN EAGER, TO SEE SOME SORT OF SUBSTANTIAL MOVEMENT TOWARD A MORE DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT. THE OPPOSITION
CONFIDENTIAL
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 SEOUL 16750 01 OF 02 020928Z

SEEMS MUCH MORE CONFIDENT OF THE FUTURE THAN THE PRO-GOVERNMENT PARTIES. ALTHOUGH THEY FEEL THAT PROLONGATION OF MILITARY CONTROL COULD RUIN THEIR PLANS FOR DEMOCRATIZATION. EVERYONE BELIEVES THAT U.S. POWER TO SHAPE EVENTS IS THE GREATEST IN YEARS, AND OPPOSITION FIGURES SAY WE WOULD BE FOOLS NOT TO USE THAT POWER TO ER KOREAN DEMOCRACY. SUB-SURFACE POLITICAL ACTIVITY IS HIGH AND WILL PICK UP AFTER THE PRESIDENT'S FUNERAL. MUCH OF THE VENOM DIRECTED AT PARK AS A PERSON IS GONE. KIM YONG-SAM

DEPARTMENT OF STATE 9003668 ISJ/FPC/CDR TRB Date. 9/13/93

<input type="checkbox"/> RELEASE	<input type="checkbox"/> DECLASSIFY	MR Cases Only:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCISE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DECLASSIFY IN PART	EO Citations
<input type="checkbox"/> DENY		TWAINSWORTH TS authority to
<input type="checkbox"/> DELETE Non-Responsive Info		<input type="checkbox"/> S or <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C OADR
FOIA Exemptions 81		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CLASSIFY as
PA Exemptions		<input type="checkbox"/> DOWNGRADE TS to <input type="checkbox"/> S or <input type="checkbox"/> C OADR

F889

374

Handwritten notes: P, 12, 14, etc.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED



SEEMS DETERMINED TO PRESS FOR QUICK, MAXIMUM GAINS, BUT EVEN SOME OF HIS PARTY COLLEAGUES SEE HIS INFLEXIBILITY AS AN OBSTACLE TO MOVEMENT TOWARD DEMOCRACY. NO MATTER WHAT DEVELOPS, STATEMENTS AND ACTIONS OF THE U.S. ARE GOING TO BE SEEN AS TREMENDOUSLY SIGNIFICANT BY THE KOREANS AND MOST WILL GIVE US A LARGE SHARE OF THE CREDIT OR BLAME FOR THE EVENTUAL OUTCOME. END SUMMARY.

3. SINCE PRESIDENT PARK'S DEATH, WE HAVE SPOKEN TO A NUMBER OF POLITICALLY-AWARE KOREANS ABOUT THE EVENTS LEADING UP TO HIS KILLING AND PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE. MOST OF THESE CONTACTS WERE AMONG THE OPPOSITION AND DISSIDENT ELEMENTS, ALTHOUGH SOME PRO-GOVERNMENT POLITICIANS WERE INCLUDED. THEIR OPINIONS DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT THE FEELING OF THE AVERAGE KOREAN. AMONG THE OPPOSITIONISTS THERE IS CONCERN THAT PRESIDENT PARK'S DEATH WAS THE RESULT OF A KCIA OR MILITARY COUP PLOT. WHILE RUMORS ABOUT THE PRESIDENT'S DEATH EXISTED FROM THE VERY FIRST, A NUMBER OF CIRCUMSTANCES (GENERAL CHUNG SUNG-HWA'S PRESENCE IN THE AREA, THE ROLE OF KIM KYE-WON, AND DEBATE ABOUT WHO DID THE ACTUAL SHOOTING OF THE PRESIDENT) HAVE LED TO A CONVICTION BY MANY POLITICALLY-AWARE KOREANS WE HAVE TALKED WITH THAT THE PRESIDENT'S DEATH WAS FAR MORE THAN A BIZARRE INCIDENT IN WHICH ONLY KIM

PAGE 03 SEUL 16750 01 OF 02 020928Z

CHAE-KYU AND HIS HENCHMEN WERE INVOLVED. THESE SAME PEOPLE ALSO TEND TO ASSUME THAT THE U.S. PLAYED A ROLE IN THE PRESIDENT'S DEATH, OR AT LEAST GAVE TACIT APPROVAL FOR THE SHOOTING. ACCORDING TO THE PEOPLE WHO VOICE THESE SUSPICIONS, THE ROK MILITARY, HAVING BEEN THRUST INTO POWER, MAY WELL DECIDE NOT TO RELINQUISH IT.

4. PRO-GOVERNMENT POLITICIANS, DEPRIVED OF THEIR LEADER, ARE CLEARLY LOSS AS TO WHAT TO DO. THE SHOCK THEY FEEL, COMBINED WITH THE ABSENCE OF ANYONE ABLE TO GIVE THEM ORDERS, HAS LEFT THEM DRIFTING. "BOTH CHA CHI-CHOL AND KIM CHAE-KYU USED TO ORDER US AROUND", SAID ONE DRP ASSEMBLYMAN, "NOW THEY, AND THE PRESIDENT, ARE GONE." THERE IS SYMPATHY AMONG PRO-GOVERNMENT POLITICIANS FOR MANY OF THE REFORMS ADVOCATED BY THEIR OPPOSITION COLLEAGUES. FOR EXAMPLE, ONE YOUNG YUJONGHOE ASSEMBLYMAN TOLD US THAT MANY OF HIS FELLOW PARTY MEMBERS FAVOR DIRECT PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, THE LIFTING OF EM-9 AND SIMILAR DEMOCRATIC REFORMS, ALTHOUGH SOME SORT OF TRANSITIONAL PERIOD IS NEEDED BEFORE THESE REFORMS COULD BE REALIZED. HE, LIKE NDP ASSEMBLYMAN YI CHOL-SUNG AND KO HUNG-MUN, SAID THAT PEOPLE WOULD ACCEPT A TRANSITIONAL PERIOD IF IT WERE MADE CLEAR THAT PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS WOULD FOLLOW. ACTING PRESIDENT CH'OE KYU-HA'S NAME IS MOST OFTEN MENTIONED AS A POSSIBLE LEADER DURING THIS PERIOD, BUT WE HAVE ALSO HEARD THAT CHUNG IL-KWON COULD PERFORM

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED



TEXT OF TELEGRAM 79SEOUL 016750

UNCLASSIFIED

374

SUCH A ROLE EFFECTIVELY AND MIGHT ACCEPT THE POST ON THAT BASIS.

5. THE OPPOSITION, INCLUDING THE DISSIDENTS, ARE NOW ACTING MORE CONFIDENT OF THEIR ABILITY TO SHAPE THE FUTURE THAN ARE THE PRO-GOVERNMENT PEOPLE WE HAVE TALKED WITH.



NNNN

* * * * *
* * * * *
* * * * *
* * * * *
* * * * *
* * * * *

* * * * *
* * * * *
* * * * *
* * * * *
* * * * *
* * * * *
* * * * *
* * * * *

UNCLASSIFIED



TEXT OF TELEGRAM 79SEOUL 016750

ADP985

PAGE 01 SEOUL 16750 02 OF 02 020947Z
ACTION EA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADS-00 L-01 H-01 INR-05 PM-03 PA-01
SP-02 HA-02 ACDA-10 CIAE-00 DDDE-00 NSAE-00
NSGG-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 OMB-01 /047 W
-----100538 020959Z /21

0 020920Z NOV 79
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2057
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

SECTION 02 OF 02 SEOUL 16750

THEY SEE THE REACTION TO THE PRESIDENT'S DEATH PROOF THAT EVEN GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS IN SECONDARY POSITIONS REALIZED PARK HAD TO GO. GIVEN THIS, THEY SEE THE PRESENT PERIOD AS A PERFECT OPPORTUNITY TO AMEND THE CONSTITUTION TO PROVIDE FOR THE DIRECT ELECTION OF A PRESIDENT AND NEW ASSEMBLY IN A FREE, NATION-WIDE POLL. OTHER CONSTITUTIONAL REVISIONS, SUCH AS THE ABOLITION OF THE APPOINTED YUJONGHDE AND ELECTORAL-COLLEGE-LIKE NATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR UNIFICATION, ARE ALSO NECESSARY, THEY SAY. EVEN MANY OF THE DISSIDENTS, HOWEVER, ARE WILLING TO WAIT FOR THESE CHANGES AS LONG AS THEY ARE SURE THEY WILL HAVE A CHANCE TO PRESS THEIR CAUSES OVER THE NEXT "TRANSITIONAL" YEAR. KIM YONG-SAM IS IN THE LEAD OF THOSE SAYING THAT WHAT KOREA NEEDS IS REFORM NOW, NOT VAGUE PROMISES OF FUTURE CHANGE, BUT MANY IN HIS OWN PARTY DO NOT AGREE.

6. IN THE MINDS OF THE NDP AND DISSIDENTS, THE MAJOR PERCEIVED OBSTACLE TO CONSTITUTIONAL REVISION AND ELECTIONS IS THE MILITARY. AS POINTED OUT, THERE IS A WIDE-SPREAD CONCERN THAT THE MILITARY, HAVING ACHIEVED POWER, PERHAPS AS THE RESULT OF A COUP PLOT, WILL EXTEND MARTIAL LAW INDEFINITELY TO JUSTIFY REMAINING IN POWER. EVEN IF THE MILITARY WAS NOT INCLINED TO MAINTAIN ITSELF IN POWER,
CONFIDENTIAL
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 SEOUL 16750 02 OF 02 020947Z

TOO RAUCOUS ACTIVITY ON THE POLITICAL SCENE COULD LEAD TO THE SAME RESULT. EVEN SOME PRO-GOVERNMENT POLITICIAAND ACADEMICIANS SUBSCRIBE TO THI

7. THE OPPOSITION/DISSIDENT LEADERS FEEL THAT ONLY DIRECT, CLEAR-CUT U.S. INTERVENTION CAN PREVENT THIS. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD TIME AND AGAIN THAT THE POWER OF THE U.S. TO SHAPE EVENTS IS GREATER NOW THAN IT HAS BEEN FOR MANY YEARS AND THAT WE WOULD BE FOOLISH NOT TO USE IT. OPPOSITION POLITICIANS SCOFF AT STATEMENTS THAT KOREA'S FUTURE

PAGE NO. 4

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED



374

TEXT OF TELEGRAM 79SEOUL 016750

MUST BE WORKED OUT BY KOREANS. ONE NDP ASSEMBLYMAN, STRONG SUPPORTER OF KIM YONG-SAM, SAID, "IF YOU DON'T TAKE ACTION, THE MILITARY WILL JUST STAY IN POWER. THE STUDENTS AND PEOPLE WILL RISE UP AGAINST THIS, AND YOU WILL HAVE INDIRECTLY CAUSED THE VERY CHAOS YOU CLAIM YOU WANT TO AVOID." [

B/13

----- A YUJONGHOE ASSEMBLYMAN ADDED, "YOU'RE ONE OF THE FOUR POWERS IN THIS FLUID SITUATION, WHETHER YOU LIKE IT OR NOT." (THE OTHER POWERS ARE THE MILITARY, THE PEOPLE, AND THE POLITICIANS AS A GROUP.)

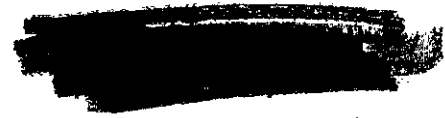
8. COMMENT: ON THE EVE OF THE FUNERAL, THE POLITICAL KETTLE IS BUBBLING BENEATH THE SURFACE, AND THERE ARE INNUMERABLE MEETINGS BETWEEN POLITICAL FRIENDS AND RIVALS ALIKE. THERE WILL BE EVEN MORE ACTIVITY ONCE THE PERIOD OF MOURNING FOR PRESIDENT PARK IS OVER. THE OPPOSITION SEES A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO PRESS FOR FREE ELECTIONS AND BASIC CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS REFORMS DURING THE WEEKS AHEAD, AND HAS ADOPTED A POSITIVE APPROACH. PRESIDENT PARK WAS THE FOCUS OF THE OPPOSITION'S ANTI-PATHY TOWARD



PAGE 03 ^{*****} SEOUL 16750 02 OF 02 020947Z _{*****}

THE GOVERNMENT; NOW THAT HE'S GONE MUCH OF THE VENOM SEEMS TO HAVE GONE OUT OF OPPOSITION THINKING. BOTH OPPOSITION AND RULING PARTY POLITICIANS ASSUME THAT, BARRING A MILITARY TAKEOVER, THE YUSHIN SYSTEM WILL UNDERGO CHANGES. NO MATTER WHO WINDS UP ON TOP, YUSHIN WAS SO CLOSELY TIED WITH THE LATE PRESIDENT THAT IT CANNOT CONTINUE IN TOTO.

9. POLITICIANS WE HAVE TALKED WITH, BUT ESPECIALLY THE OPPOSITION POLS, SEE DANGER, BUT ALSO OPPORTUNITY FOR DEMOCRATIC REFORMS AHEAD. PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES MAY PROVIDE KIM YONG-SAM'S LAST CHANCE TO BECOME PRESIDENT, AND HE IS GOING TO GO FOR BROKE. PARADOXICALLY, HOWEVER, KIM YONG-SAM IS SEEN, EVEN BY SOME OF HIS OPPOSITION PARTY SUPPORTERS, AS ONE OF THE REAL OBSTACLES IN MOVING TOWARD A MORE DEMOCRATIC FORM OF GOVERNMENT. ONE MODERATE NDP ASSEMBLYMAN, WHO CLEARLY FEARS THAT THE MILITARY MIGHT STAY IN POWER, TOLD US THAT KIM, BY HIS UNWILLINGNESS TO COMPROMISE AND INFLAMMATORY STATEMENTS, MIGHT "FRIGHTEN" THE MILITARY LEADERS INTO THINKING THAT THEY HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO TAKE OVER. IN ANY EVENT, WHAT THE U.S. SAYS AND DOES DURING THE COMING WEEKS WILL BE READ BY KOREANS AS HAVING GREAT SIGNIFICANCE, NO MATTER WHAT OUR INTENTION -- AND WE ARE LIKELY TO BE CREDITED WITH THE EVENTUAL RESULT. GLEYSTEN



PAGE NO. 5

UNCLASSIFIED