

CLASSIFIED

TELEGRAM

5:51 p.m.

INDICATE:

- COLLECT
- CHARGE TO

E.O. 11652: GDS
 TAGS: EFIN, ETRD, MNUC, TECH, PARM, KS, HA, TH, CH
 SUBJECT: ROK NUCLEAR FUEL REPROCESSING PLANS

DISTRIBUTION

ACTION:

SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY

P R 030851Z

INFO: AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
 AMEMBASSY PARIS
 AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
 AMEMBASSY TOKYO
 USMISSION IAEA VIENNA

SECRET SEOUL 6859

E X D I S

- REF: (A) STATE 195214
 (B) SEOUL 6495
 (C) SEOUL 6549

EXDIS

1. I HAD LENGTHY PRIVATE DISCUSSION WITH DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER NAM DUK WOO, AT HIS REQUEST, ON ROK NUCLEAR FUEL REPROCESSING PLANS. NAM HAD BEEN BRIEFED ON MY APPROACH TO ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SEE REF B AND C), AND IS GREATLY CONCERNED BY IMPLICATIONS.

DRAFTED BY:

AMB. SNEIDER; jgd

DRAFTING DATE

9/3/75

TEL. EXT.

4200

APPROVED BY:

AMB. SNEIDER

CLEARANCES:

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2. AT HIS REQUEST I WENT OVER WITH HIM CURRENT POSITION AND RATIONALE FOR IT. IN PRESENTING OUR VIEWS, I EMPHASIZED PARTICULARLY, ECONOMIC COSTS ~~CONDITIONS~~ AND RISKS INVOLVED, CONGRESSIONAL PROBLEMS, PARTICULARLY AS THEY RELATE TO KORI II REACTOR LOAN, AND ATTRACTIVENESS TO KOREA OF REGIONAL APPROACH.

3. NAM SAID THAT CANCELLATION OF CONTRACT FOR FRENCH REPROCESSING PLANT COULD BECOME "EXPLOSIVE ISSUE", AND HE GREATLY CONCERNED ABOUT PRESIDENT PARK'S REACTION WHEN HE IS INFORMED FULLY OF U.S. VIEWS. THE PRESIDENT HAS NOT YET BEEN INFORMED AND NAM IS TO MEET WITH THE PRIME MINISTER AND A FEW KEY CABINET OFFICIALS FIRST TO DISCUSS THE PROBLEM.

4. NAM SAID THERE IS VERY STRONG RESISTANCE TO CANCELLATION OF THE FRENCH CONTRACT AT THIS DATE DATE, FROM BOTH TOP LEADERSHIPS AND SCIENTISTS. ~~DATE DATE~~ / THE SCIENTISTS INVOLVED CONSIDER REPROCESSING AS NECESSARY TECHNICAL TRAINING TOOL AS PRELIMINARY TO REGIONAL REPROCESSING PLANT ~~PLANNING~~ WHICH ROKG PREPARED TO SUPPORT. IN THIS CONNECTION WE HAVE SEPARATE SRF

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REPORTS INDICATING THAT BOTH MINISTER CHOI AND KAERI
PRESIDENT YUN CONSIDER THEIR CAREERS AS WELL AS FUTURE
SURVIVAL AND EXPANSION OF KAERI AT STAKE. FURTHERMORE,
ROKG IS PREPARED TO HAVE U.S. TECHNICIANS PRESENT
AT PLANT SHOULD WE HAVE ANY CONCERN ABOUT SMALL AMOUNT
OF PLUTONIUM PRODUCED. ADDITIONALLY, ^{FULL} ~~CLOSE~~ SAFEGUARD
AGREEMENT IS BEING NEGOTIATED WITH FRENCH AND IAEA.

5. NAM SAID THAT ROKG FRANKLY DID NOT UNDERSTAND
U.S. CONCERNS, GIVEN FACT FRENCH PLANT HAS SUCH
LIMITED CAPABILITIES AND IS VIRTUALLY "TOY". KEY ROK OFFICIALS
WONDER
/ ~~UNDERSTOOD~~ WHY WE WERE TAKING SUCH STRONG POSITION WITH ROKG
GIVEN REPROCESSING PLANS OF BRAZIL AND IRAN, AND
JAPAN
FACT THAT / ~~JAPANESE~~ ALREADY ~~UNDERWAY~~ HAS EXPERIMENTAL
REPROCESSING PLANT.

6. NAM CONCLUDED BY SAYING VERY FRANKLY, SENIOR ROKG
OFFICIALS RESENTED "AMERICAN ARM-TWISTING" ON THIS
ISSUE AND WERE FEARFUL ABOUT PRESIDENT PARK'S REACTION.
HE PERSONALLY WISHED TO AVOID CONFRONTATION WITH
U.S. AND WAS PREPARED TO MAKE CASE FOR ACCEPTING
U.S. POSITION. I POINTED OUT THAT RISK INVOLVED
FOR ROKG WAS ~~THE~~ JEOPARDIZING U.S. SUPPORT FOR
DEVELOPMENT OF PEACEFUL NUCLEAR PLANTS GIVEN

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CONGRESSIONAL ATTITUDES AND I SHOWED HIM LETTER FROM
CONGRESSMAN REES TO CASEY TO BUTTRESS HIS CASE. NAM
APPRECIATED ARGUMENTATION GIVEN HIM BUT WAS NOT
OPTIMISTIC. HE THOUGHT ROKG WOULD PROBABLY, IF NECESSARY,
FORGO KORE II LOAN AND SEEK PURCHASE OF NUCLEAR
POWER PLANTS FROM THE FRENCH IF NO ALTERNATIVE
AVAILABLE.

7. COMMENT: NAM HAS LONG RECORD OF BEING STRAIGHTFORWARD
US.
WITH/~~US~~ WE JUDGE THAT HE IS ACCURATELY REFLECTING
HIGH LEVEL VIEWS ON THIS PROBLEM, PARTICULARLY SINCE
HIS OFFICIAL INTEREST IS IN GAINING U.S. EXIM BANK
SUPPORT FOR SALE OF U.S. NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS.

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