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29 Mar 2002

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PAGE 01 SEOUL 03331 01 OF 07 212342Z
ACTION SS-00

INFO LOG-00 OASY-00 ADS-00 /000W
-----3ECFD2 212343Z /38

O 212335Z APR 94
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5234
SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY BEIJING
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY MANILA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USMISSION USVIENNA
JOINTSTAFF WASHDC
COMUSKOREA SEOUL KOR
USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI

~~SECRET~~ SECTION 01 OF 07 SEOUL 03331

~~EXDIS/SPECAT EXCLUSIVE~~

VIENNA FOR UNVIE

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: MARR, MNUC, PARM, KS, KN
SUBJECT: SECDEF MEETING WITH ROK MINISTER OF DEFENSE RHEE

1. ~~S~~ ENTIRE TEXT.

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PAGE 02 SEOUL 03331 01 OF 07 212342Z

2. SUMMARY. SECRETARY OF DEFENSE WILLIAM PERRY MET WITH
REPUBLIC OF KOREA MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENSE RHEE BYONG
TAE ON APRIL 20 FOR EIGHTY MINUTES. SECDEF REITERATED TO
MINISTER RHEE THE DESIRABILITY OF CONTINUING ON THE
DIPLOMATIC PATH, BUT IF THAT FAILS, SANCTIONS WOULD BE
NECESSARY. SINCE SANCTIONS COULD RAISE RISKS, FORCE
READINESS MUST BE MAINTAINED AND DETERRENT ABILITY
IMPROVED FOR THE COMBINED FORCES. SECDEF EMPHASIZED THE
NEED FOR SOLIDARITY WITH THE ROKG AS WE CONTINUE WITH THIS
STRATEGY. MINISTER RHEE AGREED AND REQUESTED THAT A DATE

Current Class: SECRET

Page: 1

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~~SECRET~~

~~CHANNEL: n/a
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2

Date Printed:

29 Mar 2002

DOC_NBR: 1994SEOUL03331

BE SET FOR NOVEMBER TO HOLD TEAM SPIRIT 94. AFTER A BRIEF DISCUSSION OVER A DRAFT, AN AGREEMENT WAS REACHED AND A PRESS RELEASE WAS MADE, STATING THAT "WE AGREED TO RESUME PLANNING FOR TEAM SPIRIT 94," AND "IF NORTH KOREA FAILS TO TAKE THE STEPS ENVISIONED IN THE FEBRUARY AGREEMENT, TEAM SPIRIT 94 WOULD BE HELD IN THE NOVEMBER TIME FRAME." END SUMMARY.

3. SECRETARY OF DEFENSE WILLIAM J. PERRY MET WITH REPUBLIC OF KOREA MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENSE RHEE BYONG TAE ON APRIL 20 IN SEOUL. ACCOMPANYING SECDEF WERE AMBASSADOR LANEY, GENERAL LUCK, AMBASSADOR GALLUCCI, MR. ROTH, LTG CLARK, MR. HALL, MR. WIEDEMANN, MR. OCHMANEK, MS. DELASKI, MGEN MYATT, BG KERN, AND DR. WOON. MINISTER RHEE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY CJCS GENERAL LEE, ASSISTANT MINISTER CHO, AND STAFF.

4. MINISTER RHEE OPENED THE MEETING BY EXPRESSING HIS CONDOLENCES FOR THE VICTIMS OF THE DOWNED HELICOPTERS IN IRAQ. HE THEN MENTIONED HOW SINCE THE SITUATION ON THE

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

PAGE 03 . SEOUL 03331 01 OF 07 . 212342Z
KOREAN PENINSULA IS CHANGING, THIS CLOSE CONTACT BETWEEN THE HEADS OF TWO DEFENSE ESTABLISHMENTS IS VERY IMPORTANT. HE THEN INVITED THE SECDEF TO SPEAK.

5. SECDEF THANKED MINISTER RHEE FOR HIS THOUGHTFUL CONDOLENCES. DR. PERRY APOLOGIZED THAT HE HAD TO POSTPONE HIS VISIT TO KOREA LAST WEEKEND BECAUSE OF THE TRAGEDY IN IRAQ AND EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION FOR MINISTER RHEE ADJUSTING HIS SCHEDULE TO ACCOMMODATE THIS DELAYED VISIT. SECDEF REMARKED THAT THERE IS ALSO A CRISIS DEVELOPING IN BOSNIA, AND THERE WAS SOME SUGGESTION IN WASHINGTON THAT SECDEF FURTHER DELAY HIS KOREA TRIP. BUT HE FELT THAT THIS TRIP TO KOREA WAS SO IMPORTANT THAT HE DELEGATED THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE BOSNIA PROBLEM TO DEPSECDEF. SECDEF SAID THAT WHILE THE MILITARY ISSUES IN BOSNIA ARE URGENT, NO PROBLEM IS AS IMPORTANT TO THE U.S. NOW AS KOREAN SECURITY. SINCE HE HAD NEVER MET RHEE BEFORE, SECDEF FELT THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT THE TWO OF THEM MET FACE TO FACE SO THAT FRIENDSHIP AND UNDERSTANDING CAN BE DEVELOPED. SECDEF THEN INVITED MINISTER RHEE TO COME TO WASHINGTON AT AN EARLY OPPORTUNITY TO CONTINUE THE SECURITY DIALOGUE. SECDEF NEXT SUGGESTED THAT THEY BEGIN TO ADDRESS SOME ISSUES OF MUTUAL CONCERN, SUCH AS READINESS OF THE COMBINED FORCES. SECDEF TOLD RHEE THAT

Current Class: ~~SECRET~~

Page: 2

~~SECRET~~

~~CHANNEL: n/a
HANDLING: EXDIS~~

2

Date Printed:
29 Mar 2002

DOC_NBR: 1994SEOUL03331

IN THE MORNING MEETING WITH GENERAL LUCK, HE HAD ASKED LUCK FOR HIS RECOMMENDATIONS OF WAYS TO IMPROVE READINESS, AND HE NOW ASKS RHEE THE SAME QUESTION. SECDEF SAID THAT THE U.S. AND ROK MUST HAVE A COMMON UNDERSTANDING ON WHAT THE THREAT IS AND WHAT SOME OF THESE STEPS TO DEAL WITH THE THREAT ARE. SECDEF ALLOWED THAT FROM TIME TO TIME THERE MAY BE DIFFERENT VIEWS ON THE THREAT AND HOW TO DEAL

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

PAGE 04 SEOUL 03331 01 OF 07 212342Z
WITH IT, BUT IT IS VITAL TO HAVE FULL SOLIDARITY ON A JOINT STRATEGY. THIS IS BECAUSE NO ACTION CAN BE TAKEN

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PAGE 01 SEOUL , 03331 02 OF 07 212343Z
ACTION SS-00

INFO LOG-00 OASY-00 ADS-00 /000W
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AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY MANILA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
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COMUSKOREA SEOUL KOR
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~~SECRET~~ SECTION 02 OF 07 SEOUL 03331

~~EXDIS/SPECIAL EXCLUSIVE~~

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Current Class: ~~SECRET~~

Page: 3

SECRET

Date Printed:
29 Mar 2002

DOC_NBR: 1994SEOUL03331

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~~HANDLING: EXDIS~~

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RELATIVE TO THE CONVENTIONAL OR NUCLEAR THREAT WITHOUT THE
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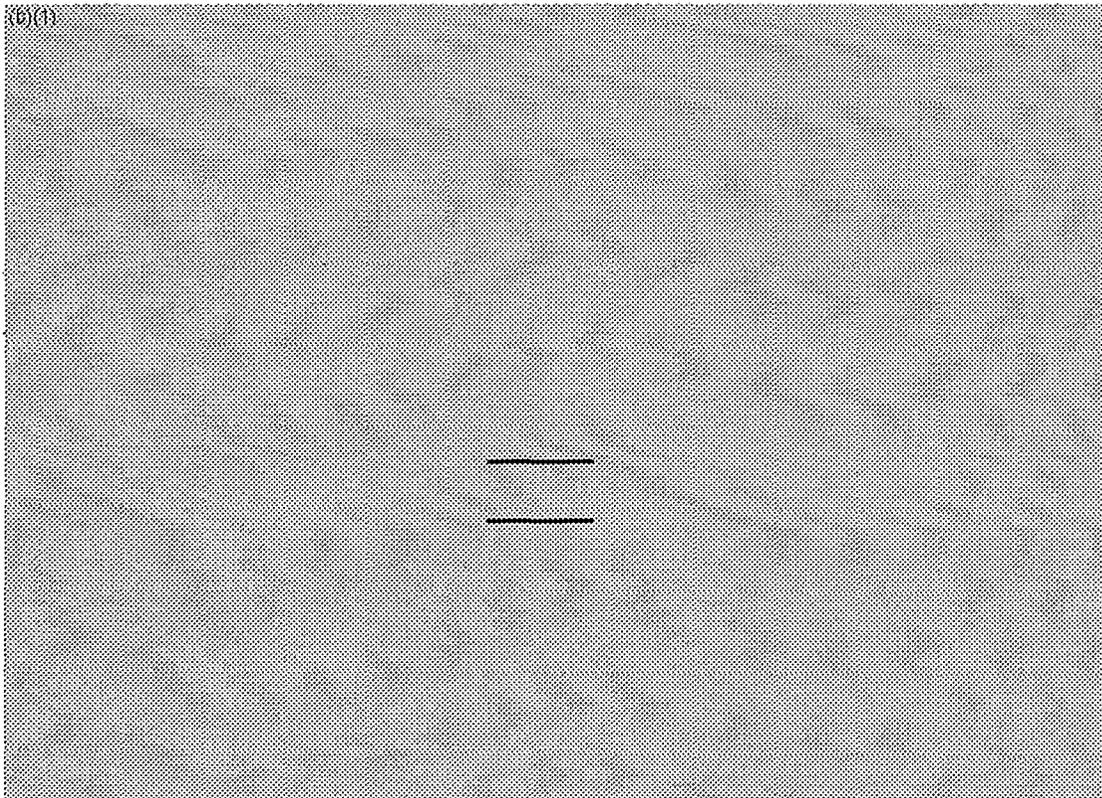
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PAGE 02 SEOUL 03331 02 OF 07 212343Z
FULL SUPPORT OF THE ROK.

6. SECDEF SAID THAT HE BELIEVED THE MEETING WITH RHEE HAD TWO PURPOSES: (1) TO DEVELOP MUTUAL RESPECT NECESSARY TO REACH MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING; AND (2) TO JOINTLY DEVELOP PROGRAMS TO DEAL WITH SECURITY PROBLEMS. BUT SECDEF EMPHASIZED THAT NO PROGRAM IS AS IMPORTANT AS THE SOLIDARITY BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

7. AT THAT POINT, MINISTER RHEE PULLED OUT AN OUTLINE HE DRAFTED HIMSELF FOR THE MEETING. HE TOLD SECDEF THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO BEGIN BY ASKING SECDEF A QUESTION ON THE NORTH KOREA NUCLEAR PROGRAM. HE IS CONFUSED BECAUSE HE READ THAT SOME BELIEVE THAT NORTH KOREA ALREADY HAS ONE OR TWO BOMBS. SO WHAT IS OUR OBJECTIVE? TO FREEZE THE PROGRAM? OR TO PROHIBIT NORTH KOREA FROM OWNING ANY BOMB?

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Current Class: ~~SECRET~~

Page: 4

Date Printed:
29 Mar 2002

~~SECRET~~

~~CHANNEL: R/S
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DOC_NBR: 1994SEOUL03331

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PAGE 04 SEOUL 03331 02 OF 07 212343Z

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PAGE 01 SEOUL 03331 03 OF 07 212344Z
ACTION SS-00

INFO LOC-00 OASY-00 ADS-00 /000W
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O 212335Z APR 94
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
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AMEMBASSY BEIJING
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

Current Class: ~~SECRET~~

Page: 5

SECRET

Date Printed:

29 Mar 2002

DOC NBR: 1994SEOUL03331

~~CHANNEL: 1/a~~
~~HANDLING: EXDIS~~

2

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USMISSION USVIENNA
JOINTSTAFF WASHDC
COMUSKOREA SEOUL KOR
USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI

~~SECRET~~ SECTION 03 OF 07 SEOUL 03331

~~EXDIS/SPECIAL EXCLUSIVE~~

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(b)(1)

11. DR: PERRY NOTED THAT THE SECOND QUESTION ON RHEE'S HANDWRITTEN OUTLINE WAS ON STRATEGY. HE SAID THAT THE QUESTION IS NOT WHETHER WE ARE FACING AN IMMINENT NUCLEAR WEAPONS CRISIS. IN FACT, THE U.S. DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT THERE IS ANY IMMINENT DANGER OF WAR ON THE PENINSULA.

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THE DIFFICULT QUESTION ARISES IF

DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS FAIL AND WE ARE NOT SUCCESSFUL IN BRINGING NORTH KOREA'S PLUTONIUM INVENTORY UNDER CONTROL. IF SO, THEN IT WOULD BE APPROPRIATE TO SEEK SANCTIONS. WE DO NOT CONSIDER SANCTIONS TO BE AN ACT OF WAR, BUT NORTH KOREA HAS DECLARED THEM AS SUCH. THEREFORE, IF WE REACH THAT STAGE, WE MUST TAKE PRUDENT STEPS TO INCREASE READINESS OF OUR FORCES, SINCE THE RISKS WILL INCREASE.

12. MINISTER RHEE THANKED SECDEF FOR CLARIFYING HIS UNDERSTANDING OF OUR ASSESSMENT AND POLICY ON THE NORTH KOREA NUCLEAR PROBLEM. HE SAID THAT SINCE THERE ARE SO MANY DIFFERENT VOICES AND VIEWS, HE APPRECIATED SECRETARY

Current Class: ~~SECRET~~

Page: 6

Date Printed:
29 Mar 2002

DOC_NBR: 1994SEOUL03331

~~SECRET~~

~~CHANNEL 1/a~~
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2

FERRY'S CLEAR EXPOSITION. HE THEN ASKED FOR ONE MORE CLARIFICATION -- WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THE "SIX MONTH GRACE PERIOD"? SECDEF SAID THAT IT WAS THE RESULT OF MISQUOTES BY THE PRESS. SECDEF SAID THAT THE PHRASE IS THE INVENTION OF A REPORTER WHO ASKED IF OUR DIPLOMATIC

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

PAGE 03 SEOUL 03331 03 OF 07 212344Z
EFFORTS FAIL BY THE END OF THE YEAR, WOULD SANCTIONS BE INEVITABLE. SECDEF TOLD RHEE THAT IN FACT, THINGS COULD COME TO A HEAD EARLIER THAN THAT IF THE DEFUELING TAKES PLACE. BUT HE NEVER MENTIONED ANYTHING ABOUT A "GRACE PERIOD." THE CURRENT CRISIS IS TIED TO THE DEFUELING WHICH MAY TAKE PLACE WITHIN ONE TO THREE MONTHS, SO IAEA MONITORING OF THAT ACTIVITY IS OUR FOCUS AND OUR DIPLOMATIC OBJECTIVE RIGHT NOW. (NOTE: THIS MEETING TOOK PLACE JUST AFTER WE RECEIVED THE LATEST KANG-GALLUCCI LETTER, SO COORDINATION WITH THE ROKG ON A RESPONSE HAD NOT BEEN MADE YET.) SECDEF ADDED THAT THIS DIPLOMATIC EFFORT STILL COULD FAIL.

13. SECDEF EXPLAINED THAT OUR DIPLOMATIC EFFORT NOW HAS TWO ELEMENTS: WE ARE WILLING TO MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO ASSIST THE SUCCESS OF THE DIPLOMATIC STRATEGY; AND IF DIPLOMACY FAILS, THERE SHOULD BE AGREEMENT TO PREPARE TO GO TO THE UN TO ASK FOR SANCTIONS. THIS OF COURSE CANNOT BE DONE WITHOUT THE CONCURRENCE OF THE ROK. WE WANT TO SEE THE ROK AND THE U.S. IN SYNCH ON BOTH OF THESE ELEMENTS.

(b)(1)

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~~SECRET~~

PAGE 04 SEOUL 03331 03 OF 07 212344Z

~~SECRET~~

Current Class: ~~SECRET~~

Page: 7

~~SECRET~~

Date Printed:

29 Mar 2002

DOC_NBR: 1994SEOUL03331

~~CHANNEL: n/a~~

~~HANDLING: EXDIS~~

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~~SECRET~~

PAGE 01 SEOUL 03331 04 OF 07 212344Z
ACTION SS-00

INFO LOG-00 OASY-00 ADS-00 /000W
-----3ECFEF 212345Z /38

O 212335Z APR 94
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JOINTSTAFF WASHDC
COMUSKOREA SEOUL KOR
USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI

~~SECRET~~ SECTION 04 OF 07 SROUL 03331

~~EXDIS/SPECAT EXCLUSIVE~~

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(b)(3) [Redacted]

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

PAGE 02 SEOUL 03331 04 OF 07 212344Z

(b)(3) [Redacted]

Current Class: ~~SECRET~~

Page: 8

SECRET

Date Printed:

29 Mar 2002

DOC_NBR: 1994SEOUL03331

~~CHANNEL: n/a~~
~~HANDLING: EXDIS~~

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15. AT THIS POINT, MINISTER RHEE LAUNCHED INTO A SUMMARY OF THE SOUTH KOREAN DETERMINATION TO AVOID CONFLICT ON THE PENINSULA. HE SAID THAT THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA HAS DEVOTED ITSELF SINCE 1950 TO NATION-BUILDING. THE PER CAPITA INCOME HAS GONE FROM \$80 TO \$7000 PER YEAR. IF THERE IS ANOTHER WAR, THE COUNTRY WILL BE TOTALLY WIPED OUT. IN ORDER TO DETER WAR, WE MUST BEEF UP READINESS OF OUR FORCES. HE REMARKED THAT HIS GOOD RELATIONS WITH GENERAL LUCK SYMBOLIZE THE STRONG ALLIANCE. THE ROK IS SPENDING TWENTY PERCENT OF THE GOVERNMENT'S BUDGET ON DEFENSE, TO MAINTAIN A STANDING FORCE OF 680,000. THIS PROVES THAT HIS COUNTRY IS INTENT ON PREVENTING WAR. MINISTER RHEE SAID THE ROK DEFENSE BUDGET IS \$12 BILLION THIS YEAR, WITH 30 PERCENT GOING FOR MODERNIZATION. BUT THE ROK CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT IS RESISTANT TO RECOGNIZING THE NEED TO MAINTAIN SUCH A STRONG DEFENSE. THE KOREAN PEOPLE ARE THINKING THAT SINCE THE SOVIET UNION HAS DISSOLVED, THERE IS NOW PEACE, SO WHY IS THERE SUCH A LARGE MILITARY BURDEN IN THE COUNTRY? MINISTER RHEE CONTINUED THAT DURING THE KOREAN WAR, THERE WERE TWO MILLION CASUALTIES, WITH TEN MILLION FAMILY SEPARATIONS. A WAR NOW WOULD BE 100 TIMES

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 SEOUL 03331 04 OF 07 212344Z
WORSE, AND SOUTH KOREAN NATION-BUILDING WOULD BE TURNED INTO ASHES. IN ORDER TO PREVENT THAT, RHEE EMPHASIZED, STEPS MUST BE TAKEN TO IMPROVE ROK AND COMBINED FORCES READINESS.

16. DR. PERRY SAID THAT HE WOULD SUM UP THE ISSUE WITH THREE STATEMENTS: (1) WE WILL NOT INITIATE WAR; (2) WE WILL NOT PROVOKE A WAR; BUT (3) WE SHOULD NOT INVITE A WAR BY BEING WEAK. THEREFORE, DETERRENCE IS VERY, VERY IMPORTANT, AND READINESS IS VERY, VERY IMPORTANT. THE DPRK ASSERTS THAT OUR DETERRENT ACTIONS ARE PROVOCATIVE -- E.G., EVEN CLAIMING THAT PATRIOTS ARE PROVOCATIVE, BUT WE CANNOT BE COWED BY NORTH KOREAN PROPAGANDA.

17. MINISTER RHEE THEN TURNED TO THE SUBJECT OF TEAM SPIRIT. HE SAID THAT WHEN WE NEGOTIATE WITH NORTH KOREA, WE MUST DO IT WHEN OUR MILITARY FORCES ARE STRONG. IN DEALING WITH NORTH KOREA, WE MUST MAINTAIN PERSEVERANCE. HE COMMENTED THAT ROK DECISION-MAKING IS NOW HEADING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION -- IN ORDER TO INDUCE NORTH KOREA TO ACCEPT IAEA INSPECTIONS, WE MUST HAVE A FIRM ATTITUDE. MINISTER RHEE SAID THAT HE REALIZED SECDEF DID NOT WANT TO

Current Class: ~~SECRET~~

Page: 9

SECRET

Date Printed:
29 Mar 2002

DOC_NBR: 1994SEOUL03331

~~CHANNEL: n/a~~
~~HANDLING: EXDIS~~

2

SET A SPECIFIC DATE, BUT HE REMINDED SECDEF THAT DURING THE NOVEMBER 93 U.S.-ROK SUMMIT, IT WAS AGREED THAT THE ROKG WOULD TAKE THE LEAD ON THE TEAM SPIRIT DECISION. THIS IS WHY THE ROK WANTS TO MAKE AN ANNOUNCEMENT TODAY.

18. DR. PERRY RESPONDED BY REVIEWING THE RECENT HISTORY OF TEAM SPIRIT 94 -- THAT IT WAS SUSPENDED IN FEBRUARY UNTIL THE NORTH DID NOT ALLOW THE COMPLETION OF IAEA INSPECTIONS AND FAILED TO ENGAGE THE SOUTH IN NUCLEAR

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 SEOUL 03331 04 OF 07 212344Z

SECRET

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SECRET

PAGE 01 SEOUL 03331 05 OF 07 212345Z
ACTION SS-00

INFO LOG-00 OASY-00 ADS-00 /000W
-----3ECFFA 212345Z /38

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COMUSKOREA SEOUL KOR
USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI

~~SECRET~~ SECTION 05 OF 07 SEOUL 03331

~~EXDIS/SPECAT EXCLUSIVE~~

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Current Class: SECRET

Page: 10

SECRET

Date Printed:

29 Mar 2002

DOC_NBR: 1994SEOUL03331

~~CHANNEL: n/a~~

~~HANDLING: EXDTS~~

2

DIALOGUE. AT THIS TIME, WE WOULD STILL LIKE INSPECTIONS

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

PAGE 02 SEOUL 03331 05 OF 07 212345Z
TO BE REVIVED, AND IF THEY ARE, WE ARE STILL WILLING NOT
TO HOLD TEAM SPIRIT 94. DR. PERRY SAID THAT HIS CONCERN
WAS THAT IF THERE IS A FIRM SETTING OF A DATE NOW, WE MAY
CANCEL IT LATER AGAIN, AND THAT WOULD MAKE US LOOK WEAK.
IF OUR ANNOUNCEMENT WERE MORE VAGUE AND CONDITIONAL, THAT
WOULD BE BETTER. AT THIS POINT, THE ATTENTION OF MINISTER
RHEE AND SECDEF TURNED TO A DRAFT THE U.S. HAD PROVIDED TO
THE ROK REGARDING TEAM SPIRIT 94. AFTER A DISCUSSION OF
THE LANGUAGE, THE TEXT OF AN AGREED PARAGRAPH WAS WRITTEN
TO BE INSERTED IN A PRESS RELEASE PREVIOUSLY DRAFTED BY
MND AND REVISED CONSIDERABLY BY SECDEF'S PARTY. THAT
PRESS STATEMENT WAS RELEASED AT 1600 AFTER THE MEETING
WITH MINISTER RHEE AND CAN BE FOUND IN PARAGRAPH 20.

19. AFTER THIS AGREEMENT WAS REACHED ON LANGUAGE,
MINISTER RHEE WAS ECSTATIC. HE SAID THAT PRESIDENT KIM
PERSONALLY HAD DELEGATED THIS RESPONSIBILITY TO HIM, AND
HE WAS GLAD THAT DR. PERRY AND HE WERE ABLE TO AGREE TO
MAKE THE TEAM SPIRIT ANNOUNCEMENT DURING THE VISIT.
(NOTE: PRESIDENT KIM TOLD DR. PERRY LATER THAT HE WAS
DELIGHTED WITH THE AGREEMENT REACHED WITH MINISTER RHEE ON
TEAM SPIRIT.)

20. BEGIN TEXT OF PRESS STATEMENT, AS PREPARED AND
RELEASED BY THE MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEFENSE, AS RENDERED
IN ENGLISH BY MND:

"DISCUSSION BETWEEN U.S. SECRETARY OF DEFENSE AND ROK
MINISTER OF DEFENSE"

RECONFIRMATION OF FIRM ROK-US ALLIANCE

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PAGE 03 SEOUL 03331 05 OF 07 212345Z

THE TWO MINISTERS CONFIRMED THAT THE ROK-US COMBINED
DEFENSE SYSTEM, WHICH WAS BUILT ON THE FOUNDATION OF THE
MUTUAL DEFENSE TREATY, IS BEING MAINTAINED MORE SOLIDLY
THAN EVER, AND AGREED TO STRENGTHEN AND FURTHER DEVELOP

Current Class: ~~SECRET~~

Page: 11

SECRET

Date Printed:
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DOC_NBR: 1994SEOUL03331

~~CHANNEL: n/a~~
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2

THE SYSTEM CONTINUOUSLY TO INCREASE DETERRENCE CAPABILITY
AGAINST THE NK.

ESPECIALLY, SECRETARY PERRY REASSERTED THE FIRM COMMITMENT
OF THE US TO RENDER PROMPT AND EFFECTIVE ASSISTANCE TO
COPE WITH ANY SECURITY THREAT AGAINST THE REPUBLIC OF
KOREA AND TO CONTINUE TO PLAY ACTIVE ROLE IN MAINTAINING
THE STABILITY AND PEACE IN THE NORTHEAST ASIA.

JOINT MEASURES IN RESOLVING NORTH KOREA'S NUCLEAR ISSUE

BOTH MINISTERS RECONFIRMED THE BASIC POSITION OF BOTH
GOVERNMENTS THAT THE NK'S NUCLEAR DEVELOPMENT MUST BE
HALTED, AND THIS ISSUE SHOULD BE RESOLVED IN PEACEFUL AND
DIPLOMATIC MANNER THROUGH DIALOGUE UNDER A FIRM
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION SYSTEM.

IN ADDITION, THE TWO MINISTERS DISCUSSED IN DEPTH ABOUT
ROK-US NEED TO MAINTAIN THE DETERRENCE AND PREPAREDNESS
FOR UNEXPECTED CONTINGENCIES.

ASSESSMENT OF NK THREAT AND CONSULTATIONS ON THE
ENHANCEMENT OF COMBINED DEFENSE CAPABILITIES

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PAGE 04 SEOUL 03331 05 OF 07 212345Z

~~SECRET~~

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~~SECRET~~

PAGE 01 SEOUL 03331 06 OF 07 212346Z

ACTION SS-00

INFO LOG-00 OASY-00 ADS-00 /000W
-----3ED000 212346Z /38

O 212335Z APR 94
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Current Class: ~~SECRET~~

Page: 12

~~SECRET~~

~~CHANNEL: n/a
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2

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AMEMBASSY MANILA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USMISSION USVIENNA
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COMUSKOREA SEOUL KOR
USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI

~~SECRET~~ SECTION 06 OF 07. SEOUL 03331

~~EXDIS/SPECAT EXCLUSIVE~~

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THE TWO MINISTERS RECOGNIZED THAT NK'S THREAT AGAINST THE

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

PAGE 02 SEOUL 03331 06 OF 07 212346Z

SOUTH CONTINUES TO EXIST, AND THIS THREAT IS INCREASING GRADUALLY DUE TO NK'S FORCE MODERNIZATION AND NUCLEAR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS. HOWEVER, THEY ASSESSED THAT THERE WAS NOT ANY PARTICULAR INDICATION WHICH SUGGESTS A HEIGHTENED RISK OF MILITARY CONFRONTATION AT PRESENT TIME.

BOTH MINISTERS AGREED THAT THE DEPLOYMENT OF THE STATE-OF-THE-ART DEFENSIVE WEAPON SYSTEMS SUCH AS PATRIOT MISSILES WAS VERY TIMELY AND APPROPRIATE MEASURES WHICH WOULD GREATLY IMPROVE ANTI-AIRCRAFT AND ANTI-BALLISTIC MISSILE CAPABILITIES, AND THUS GREATLY CONTRIBUTE TO THE DETERRENCE OF ROK-US ALLIANCE. THEY ALSO AGREED TO CONTINUOUSLY STRENGTHEN THEIR EFFORTS TO MODERNIZING ROK ARMED FORCES AND U.S. FORCES IN KOREA AND THEIR COMBINED OPERATIONS CAPABILITIES.

MINISTER RHEE EXPLAINED THAT THE ROK ARMED FORCES HAVE BEEN STEADILY DRIVING ITS FORCE IMPROVEMENT, AND ESPECIALLY IN THIS YEAR, IN CONSIDERATION OF CURRENT SECURITY SITUATION, THE PRIORITY HAS GIVEN TO THE PROJECTS SUCH AS COUNTER-BATTERY CAPABILITY, NIGHT-FIGHTING CAPABILITY AND THE ENHANCEMENT OF INTEROPERABILITY TO FURTHER IMPROVE ROK-US COMBINED WARFIGHTING CAPABILITY, UNDER THE POLICY THAT THE VULNERABLE AREAS SHOULD TAKE PRECEDENCE OVER OTHER AREAS.

Current Class: ~~SECRET~~

Page: 13

Date Printed:

29 Mar 2002

DOC_NBR: 1994SEOUL03331

~~SECRET~~

~~CHANNEL: n/a~~

~~HANDLING: EXDTC~~

2

SECRETARY PERRY, IN RESPONSE, ASSESSED THAT ROK MND'S ACTION WAS VERY APPROPRIATE TO DETERRING THE NORTH KOREAN THREAT, AND EXPLAINED THAT THE US WAS ALSO DRIVING CONTINUOUSLY ITS PROGRAMS TO MODERNIZE USFK AND TO REINFORCE ITS VULNERABLE AREAS.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

PAGE 03 SEOUL 03331 06 OF 07 212346Z

TEAM SPIRIT '94

THE US AND THE ROK DISCUSSED THE CONDUCT OF TS '94. IN FEBRUARY, WE AGREED TOGETHER TO SUSPEND TS '94 IN THE CONTEXT OF AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE US AND DPRK TO MEET FOR A THIRD ROUND OF TALKS. THAT AGREEMENT INCLUDED SAFEGUARDS REQUIRED BY THE IAEA TO MAINTAIN THE CONTINUITY OF SAFEGUARDS AND THE RESUMPTION OF THE SOUTH-NORTH DIALOGUE TO INCLUDE THE NUCLEAR ISSUE. THE US AND ROK AGREED TODAY TO RESUME PLANNING FOR TS '94. IF NORTH KOREA FAILS TO TAKE THE STEPS ENVISIONED IN THE FEBRUARY AGREEMENT, TS '94 WILL BE HELD IN NOVEMBER TIME FRAME. AS BEFORE, THE US AND ROK WOULD STILL BE WILLING TO CONSIDER SUSPENSION OF TS '94 IN THE CONTEXT OF IMPLEMENTATION OF ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE THIRD ROUND OF US-DPRK TALKS.

OTHER MATTERS

SECRETARY PERRY EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION TO THE ROK GOVERNMENT FOR ITS COST SHARING EFFORT TO THE MAINTENANCE OF USFK.

MINISTER RHEE REQUESTED ACTIVE COOPERATION OF THE UNITED STATES IN DEFENSE INDUSTRIES AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AREAS FOR AN EFFICIENT EXECUTION OF ROK'S FORCE MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

THE TWO MINISTERS PROMISED TO MEET AGAIN AT THE 26TH SCM

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PAGE 04 SEOUL 03331 06 OF 07 212346Z

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Current Class: ~~SECRET~~

Page: 14

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PAGE 01 SEOUL 03331 07 OF 07 212346Z
ACTION SS-00

INFO LOG-00 OASY-00 ADS-00 /000W
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O 212335Z APR 94
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5240
SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY BEIJING
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY MANILA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USMISSION USVIENNA
JOINTSTAFF WASHDC
COMUSKOREA SEOUL KOR
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VIENNA FOR UNVIE

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: MARR, MNUC, PARM, KS, KN
SUBJECT: SECDEF MEETING WITH ROK MINISTER OF DEFENSE RHEE

TO BE HELD IN WASHINGTON D.D. IN COMING FALL TO DISCUSS

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PAGE 02 SEOUL 03331 07 OF 07 212346Z
MORE IN-DEPTH ABOUT COMMON SECURITY MATTERS BETWEEN THE
TWO COUNTRIES.

END TEXT.

21. THIS CABLE WAS DRAFTED AND CLEARED BY SECDEF PARTY.

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Page: 15

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