

# DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

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DIA RDS-38

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SECT 01 OF 42327

SECTION 1-2CF2

ACTION

DIA:

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DE RUEHULA #6517 3040015  
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TO RUEKJCS/DIA WASHDC//DC-4A/DB-2C//  
INFO RUHQHQA/COMIPAC HONOLULU HI//IPAC-IC//  
RUAGAAA/COMUSKOREA SEOUL KS//BJ-IS-H//  
RUAGOTC/CDR501MIGP SEOUL KS  
BT

SECTION 01 OF 02

SUBJECT: THIS IS IR

"THIS IS AN INFORMATION REPORT. NOT FINALLY EVALUATED  
INTELLIGENCE "

1. (U) CTY: REPUBLIC OF KOREA (KS)
2. (U) IR NBR:
3. (U) TITLE: ARMY ATTITUDES TOWARD POLITICAL/MILITARY  
SITUATION (U)

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4. (U) AB  
5. (U) DTD OF INFO: 791029  
6. (U) DTD OF REPT: 791030  
7. (U) DTD & PL AQN: 791029,

9. (U) ASSESSMENT: A 2

11. (U) REQ EVAL: YES  
12. (U) PREPARING OFF:  
13. (U) APPROVING AUTH:  
14. (U) SOURCE: ROK MILITARY OFFICIAL  
15. (U) SP INST: RESTRICTIVE CAVEATS USED TO PROTECT AN

DIRC: NO.

16. SUMMARY: THIS REPORT FORWARDS REMARKS BY SOURCE CONCERNING A POSSIBLE SUCCESSOR TO PRESIDENT PARK; POSSIBLE REVISION OF THE PRESENT CONSTITUTION AND ATTITUDES OF GENERAL ((CHONG)) SUNG HWA, ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF AND MARTIAL LAW COMMANDER. DETAILS: DURING CONVERSATION EVENING OF 29 OCT SOURCE MADE FOLLOWING COMMENTS: COMMENTS ARE PARAPHRASED FOR CLARITY:

A. COMMENTS CONCERNING POSSIBLE SUCCESSOR TO PRESIDENT PARK: WHILE SPECULATING ON A POSSIBLE REPLACEMENT FOR THE LATE PRESIDENT, SOURCE STATED THAT MANY ROKA OFFICERS THOUGHT THE IDEAL CANDIDATE WOULD BE SOMEONE WHO WAS "CLEAN," AND "NOT RICH," AND UNTAINTED BY PREVIOUS CORRUPTION. IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT THE KOREAN PEOPLE PERCEIVE WHOEVER REPLACED THE LATE PRESIDENT AS "FROM THE PEOPLE." THE IDEAL CANDIDATE WOULD HAVE HAD MILITARY EXPERIENCE, AND WOULD OBVIOUSLY HAVE TO BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE ARMY. A PURELY MILITARY MAN WAS UNDESIRABLE HOWEVER; THE PRINCIPAL OF CIVILIAN CONTROL WAS FIRMLY ESTABLISHED AND THE MILITARY DID NOT WANT THE OUTSIDE WORLD TO GET THE IMPRESSION THAT THE MILITARY HAD SEIZED POWER. IT WAS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT THAT THE SUCCESSOR BE PERCEIVED AS A POLITICAL FIGURE, WHO WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE AND HOPEFULLY RECOGNIZEABLE TO A MAJORITY OF KOREANS. SOURCE RECOGNIZED THE LACK OF CANDIDATES FITTING THIS DESCRIPTION; BUT IN THE COURSE OF CONVERSATION MENTIONED SEVERAL NAMES WITH BRIEF COMMENTS AS FOLLOWS: ((KIM)) JONG PIL: THE NAME MOST COMMONLY MENTIONED. GENERALLY ACCEPTABLE TO THE MILITARY AND WELL KNOWN TO THE

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AVERAGE KOREAN, BUT "TOO RICH" AND TAINTED BY PAST CORRUPTION.

((CHUNG)) IL KWON: PROBABLY ACCEPTABLE TO MILITARY BUT ALSO "TOO RICH."

((KIM)) YONG SAM: NO CHANCE, TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE TO THE MILITARY, A "BOY SCOUT."

((KIM)) TAE CHUNG: THOUGHTFUL PAUSE FOLLOWED BY "...DON'T THINK SO..."

((SO)) CHONG CHUL: NO POLITICAL EXPERIENCE, GOOD APPEARANCE AND VERY CAPABLE IN MILITARY AFFAIRS, BUT NOT WELL KNOWN THE KOREAN POPULACE. VERY UNLIKELY.

((CHO)) KYU HA: NOT A VIABLE CHOICE FOR THE LONG TERM, HOWEVER IT WAS POSSIBLE HIS TERM COULD BE EXTENDED UNTIL A MORE PERMANENT SUCCESSOR COULD BE FOUND.

B. [REDACTED] COMMENTS CONCERNING REVISION OF THE PRESENT CONSTITUTION: SOURCE SEVERAL TIMES MADE REFERENCE TO THE NEED TO REVISE THE CONSTITUTION, AND RO WAS LEFT WITH THE IMPRESSION THAT THIS MATTER WILL GET CLOSE ATTENTION ONCE THE MOURNING PERIOD AND STATE FUNERAL ARE OVER. THE PRESENT CONSTITUTION, ACCORDING TO SOURCE, GIVES TOO MUCH CONCENTRATED POWER TO ONE MAN, AND HE STATED THE OPINION THAT IT WOULD BE CHANGED TO DISTRIBUTE POWER MORE EVENLY. THE PRESENT CONSTITUTION WAS NOT POPULAR WITH THE "PEOPLE," AND THE ARMY IS THE CONSCIENCE OF THE PEOPLE. SOURCE WAS CLEARLY ANXIOUS TO TALK ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM WITH RO EQUALLY DETERMINED TO AVOID ANY COMMENT, AND THE SUBJECT WAS EVENTUALLY DROPPED.

C. [REDACTED] COMMENTS ON GEN CHONG SUNG HWA,

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ACTION

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DE RUEHULA #6517 3040024

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TO RUEKJCS/DIA WASHDC//DC-4A/DB-2C//  
INFO RUHQHQA/COMIPAC HONOLULU HI//IPAC-IC//  
RUAGAAA/COMUSKOREA SEOUL KS//BJ-IS-H//  
RUAGOTC/CDR501MIGP SEOUL KS  
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CHIEF OF STAFF, ROK ARMY AND MARTIAL LAW COMMANDER: SOURCE  
STATED THAT GEN CHONG WAS IN FIRM CONTROL OF THE ARMY AND  
THE SITUATION. HE IS SOLICITING ADVICE FROM A LARGE NUMBER  
OF PEOPLE TO INCLUDE CIVILIANS AND JUNIOR OFFICERS. THIS  
METHOD OF OPERATION HAS BEEN USEFUL IN THAT DIFFERENT  
GROUPS FEEL THEY ARE BEING HEARD. GEN CHONG AND THE SENIOR  
MILITARY LEADERSHIP ARE EXTREMELY HAPPY WITH THE PROMPT  
US RESPONSE TO THE SITUATION AND THE FIRM STANCE TAKEN WITH  
NORTH KOREA. THE MILITARY PRECAUTIONS SERVED TO QUIET THE  
ANXIETY OF KOREAN CITIZENS CONCERNED ABOUT THEIR SECURITY.  
WHILE GEN CHONG IS AN OUTSTANDING MILITARY OFFICER, HE  
PRIVATELY HAS SOME RESERVATIONS ABOUT HIS ROLE AS MARTIAL

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LAW COMMANDER AND POTENTIAL FUTURE ROLE, WHICH HE SEES PRIMARILY AS THE KEEPER OF PUBLIC ORDER UNTIL A VIABLE SUCCESSOR TO THE LATE PRESIDENT IS FOUND. GEN CHONG IS IN THE MIDDLE OF A SITUATION NOT OF HIS OWN MAKING BUT IS DETERMINED TO REACT FIRMLY AND IN THE PROPER MANNER. SOURCE STRONGLY SUGGESTED THAT GEN CHONG WOULD BE RECEPTIVE TO ANY ADVICE FROM THE US EMBASSY OR AMBASSADOR, AS THE US "HAS EXPERIENCE" IN CRISIS SITUATIONS SUCH AS THIS.

D. [REDACTED] FUTURE EVENTS: SOURCE WAS OF THE OPINION THAT THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE WOULD BE RELATIVELY QUIET PENDING BURIAL OF PRESIDENT PARK AND THE END OF THE OFFICIAL MOURNING PERIOD, AND FOR AN ADDITIONAL PERIOD FOLLOWING THE RELEASE OF THE REMAINING DETAILS CONCERNING THE PRESIDENT'S DEATH. HE STATED THAT THE ARMY WOULD NOT HESITATE TO USE TROOPS TO KEEP ORDER DURING THE PERIOD TO COME, AND THAT THE PRESENT TIME WAS A CRITICAL ONE DURING WHICH THE MAINTENANCE OF NATIONAL SECURITY WAS THE SINGLE OVERRIDING CONCERN.

ORIGINATOR'S COMMENTS: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] REPORTING HAS BEEN SUBSTANTIATED. SOURCE IS NOT PERSONALLY CLOSE TO CHIEF OF STAFF, ROK ARMY, GEN CHONG AND [REDACTED] DOES NOT FEEL HIS REMARKS WERE IN ANY WAY IN THE NATURE OF A CONDUIT FOR THE ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF. HIS REMARKS DO HOWEVER, PROBABLY REPRESENT PRESENT THINKING OF MANY ROK ARMY OFFICERS. [REDACTED]

SOURCE IN THE PAST HAS BEEN REMARKABLY WELL INFORMED CONCERNING EVENTS IN ROKA HEADQUARTERS.

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