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JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

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SECT 01 OF 62205

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TO RUEKJCS/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
INFO RUHQHQA/COMIPAC HONOLULU HI PRIORITY

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SECTION 01 OF 02

COMIPAC FOR IC

SUBJ: THIS IS IR

THIS IS AN INFO REPORT, NOT FINALLY EVALUATED INTEL

1. (U) COUNTRY: JAPAN (JA)/SOUTH KOREA (KS)
2. (U) REPT NO: [REDACTED]
3. (U) TITLE: ATTACHE COMMENTS ON ROK DEVELOPMENTS AND
NEW DEFENSE MINISTER (U)
4. (U) PROJ NO: N/A
5. (U) DATE OF INFO: 791213
6. (U) DATE OF REPT: 791217
7. (U) DATE & PLC OF ACQ: 791129/791213, [REDACTED]

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9. (U) ASSESSMENT: B-2

11. (U) REQ EVAL: NO.

12. (U) PREP OFCR:

13. (U) APPR OFCR:

14. (U) SOURCE: PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS

15. (U) SPEC INSTS: DIRC-NO.

16. SUMMARY: THE ROK ATTACHES IN TOKYO MADE CLEAR THEIR SUPPORT FOR PRESIDENT PARK'S POLICIES AND THEIR OPPOSITION TO RAPID LIBERALIZATION OF THE ROK POLITICAL SYSTEM. ONE ATTACHE EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR RECENT MILITARY POWER-PLAY BY YOUNGER GENERAL'S IN ROK. IR ALSO COMMENTS ON GENERAL ((CHU)) YONG-BOK, RECENTLY APPOINTED ROK DEFENSE MINISTER.

1. THE ATTACHES OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA MAINTAINED A LOW PROFILE AFTER THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT PARK. THE 29 NOVEMBER SENIOR ATTACHE LUNCHEON PROVIDED THE FIRST OPPORTUNITY TO SEE

EXTENDED
CONDOLENCES AND EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT SOME GOOD MIGHT COME OUT OF THE TRAGEDY. BOTH
PROCEEDED TO LECTURE ON MISDIRECTED POLICY OF THE U.S. AND THE U.S. LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF THE KOREAN PEOPLE, NATION AND POLITICS. IN BRIEF, THEIR THESIS WAS THAT KOREANS ONLY FUNCTION WELL UNDER STRONG, AUTHORITARIAN LEADERSHIP AND THAT THERE IS NO ROOM FOR A STRONG OPPOSITION. THEREFORE, KOREAN CANNOT, IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE, HAVE A DEMOCRACY RESEMBLING THAT OF THE U.S. OR JAPAN. BY ENCOURAGING THE OPPOSITION, THE U.S. IS MORE LIKELY TO UPSET THE SLOW BUT STEADY GAINS MADE TOWARDS A MORE LIBERAL POLITICAL SYSTEM. WHILE NOT STATING OPENLY, THE IMPLICATION WAS THAT THE U.S. CONTRIBUTED TO THE UNREST IN KOREA AND THUS INDIRECTLY ENCOURAGED THE ATMOSPHERE IN WHICH PARK WAS ASSASSINATED.

2. COMMENTED THAT THE POST-PARK SITUATION APPEARED CALM AND IT SEEMS THAT ALL, INCLUDING THE MILITARY, WERE ACTING RESPONSIBLY WHICH GAVE PROMISE OF THEIR BEING ABLE TO RIDE OUT THE CRISIS WITHOUT ANY MAJOR DISRUPTIONS IN KOREA. COUNTERED THAT ON THE CONTRARY,

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THERE WERE TOO MANY CHANGES COMING TOO FAST WHICH GIVES HIM CAUSE FOR WORRY.

3. [REDACTED] MET [REDACTED] AT A RECEPTION THE NIGHT OF 13 DECEMBER. IN THE NEWS THAT DAY WERE NUMEROUS REPORTS OF TROOP MOVEMENTS IN SEOUL AND AN APPARENT POWER PLAY BY A GROUP OF YOUNGER GENERALS. [REDACTED] APPEARED IN AN EXCELLENT MOOD AND WHEN ASKED ABOUT THE SITUATION IN KOREA, HE REPLIED AS FOLLOWS: A GROUP OF YOUNGER GENERAL OFFICERS HAVE MOVED TO INSURE THE SECURITY OF KOREA AND EVERYTHING IS NOW CALM AND UNDER CONTROL. WHEN CONCERN WAS EXPRESSED OVER THE MILITARY MAKING POWER PLAYS, [REDACTED] REPLIED THAT IT WAS NECESSARY, BECAUSE THOSE IN CONTROL WERE MOVING TOO FAST ALONG A PATH WHICH COULD NOT BE SUPPORTED BY KOREAN PEOPLE AND THAT WOULD HAVE RESULTED IN A "VERY BAD SITUATION." [REDACTED] EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THE KOREAN PEOPLE WOULD NOT SUFFER AS A RESULT OF THESE NEW DEVELOPMENTS. [REDACTED] RESPONDED BY STATING THAT PRESIDENT PARK HAD TAUGHT THE KOREAN PEOPLE TO BE STRONG AND SELF-SUFFICIENT AND HE WAS SURE THEY WOULD BE ABLE TO SURVIVE THROUGH DIFFICULT TIMES AND BE BETTER OFF FOR THE EXPERIENCE.

4. [REDACTED] THEN DISCUSSED THE FACT THAT GENERAL ((TAKEDA)) GORO, CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT STAFF (JAPAN) WAS PRESENTLY IN SEOUL ON A ONE WEEK OFFICIAL VISIT. [REDACTED] ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THIS WAS TRUE AND IN FACT POINTED OUT THAT GENERAL TAKEDA WAS HOUSED VERY NEAR THE CENTER OF ACTIVITY. [REDACTED] JOKED THAT GENERAL TAKEDA WILL GET THE IMPRESSION THAT SEOUL IS A VERY NOISY CITY AT NIGHT, CONSIDERING ALL THE

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TRUCKS AND TANKS ROLLING THROUGH THE CITY, PLUS THE
GUNFIRE. FOUND THAT HUMOROUS, BUT THOUGHT THAT
WOULD SOON COME TO AN END.

5. SUGGESTED THAT AT TIMES LIKE THIS, IT IS
FORTUNATE TO BE AN ATTACHE ASSIGNED OVERSEAS, BECAUSE
IT WAS NOT NECESSARY TO CHOOSE SIDES. ACKNOWLEDTED
THE OBSERVATION, BUT MADE NO COMMENT.

6. RECENT REPORTS STATE THAT GENERAL ((CHU)) YONG-BOK,
PRIOR CHIEF OF STAFF, ROKAF, WILL BECOME DEFENSE MINISTER.
GENERAL CHU IS PERSONALLY KNOWN FROM THE
PERIOD 1967-69 WHEN HE WAS A MAJOR GENERAL. CONTACT WAS
AGAIN MADE IN 1974 AND 1977

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GENERAL CHU IS A HARDLINER OF THE OLD SCHOOL. ONE OF THE LAST SENIOR OFFICERS TRAINED UNDER THE OLD IMPERIAL JAPANESE MILITARY SYSTEM, GENERAL CHU WAS KNOWN TO TAKE A LESS THAN MODERN APPROACH TO LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT. HE WAS MAINTAINED AS CHIEF OF STAFF, ROKAF, FOR AN UNUSUALLY LONG PERIOD OF TIME BECAUSE OF HIS POLITICAL RELIABILITY. FROM TIME TO TIME, MORE JUNIOR ROKAF OFFICERS CONFIDED BELIEF THAT ROKAF WOULD BE MUCH BETTER OFF ONCE GENERAL CHU RETIRED, AND THE NEWER GROUP OF OFFICERS ASSUMED THE LEADERSHIP OF ROKAF. GENERAL CHU WOULD FIT IN COMFORTABLY WITH THOSE WHO SUPPORT THE POLICIES OF THE LATE PRESIDENT PARK.

COMMENTS: THESE CONVERSATIONS ARE REPORTED TO GIVE AN INDICATION OF THE ATTITUDES OF THE ROK ATTACHES TOWARDS THE RECENT EVENTS IN KOREA. THEIR CONVERSATIONS MAKE IT CLEAR THEY SUPPORTED THE POLICIES OF PRESIDENT PARK AND ARE IN OPPOSITION TO RAPID MOVES TOWARD LIBERALIZATION OF THE POLITICAL PROCESS IN KOREA. MADE IT CLEAR THAT HE FAVORED THE RECENT DEMANDS OF THE YOUNGER GENERALS; HOWEVER, THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT HE HAD PRIOR KNOWLEDGE OF THE EVENTS OR THAT HE IS PERSONALLY ACQUAINTED WITH ANY OF THOSE INVOLVED IN THE KOREAN EVENTS. AND ATTITUDE MOST LIKELY REPRESENT THE SAME ATTITUDES OF OTHER OFFICERS WITHIN THE ROK FORCES.

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