

TEXT OF TELEGRAM BOSEOUL 006264

UNTIL MAY 22, ISSUED AN ULTIMATAT IF THE GOVERNMENT DID NOT MEET THEIR DEMANDS, THEY WOULD ENGAGE IN A FIERCE STRUGGLE. MOREOVER, THE STUDENTS PLANNED A FURTHER MEETING TOMORROW AT A LARGE HIGH SCHOOL, RAISING THE SPECTRE OF HUGE NUMBERS OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS JOINING COLLEGE STUDENTS IN ANY FUTURE DEMONSTRATIONS.

4. WE WERE GIVEN NO REPEAT NO NOTIFICATION OF THESE DECISIONS. FROM THE SKIMPY INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO US (INCLUDING MY TWO CONVERSATIONS WITH THE BLUE HOUSE SECRETARY GENERAL), OUR IMPRESSION IS THAT THE DECISION WAS TAKEN AS A RESULT OF A MEETING OF MILITARY LEADERS THIS MORNING. REPORTEDLY, THE MILITARY LEADERS WERE EXTREMELY UNHAPPY OVER WHAT THEY REGARDED AS EXCESSIVELY SOFT TACTICS BY THE GOVERNMENT TOWARD THE STUDENTS THIS PAST WEEK. THEY APPARENTLY DECIDED AT THE MEETING TO ADOPT THIS TOUGH POLICY, CORRECTLY ASSUMING THE PRESIDENT AND THE CABINET WOULD ACQUIESCE AFTER THE FACT.

5. OUR VISCERAL REACTION TO WHAT HAS HAPPENED IS OBVIOUSLY NEGATIVE. JUST AS THE STUDENTS DID EARLIER THIS WEEK, THE MILITARY HAVE NOW TAKEN THE LAW INTO THEIR OWN HANDS, IGNORED LEGITIMATE CHANNELS, ONCE AGAIN CUT THE USG OUT OF THE INFORMATION-NET, AND THROWN DOWN THE GAUNTLET TO

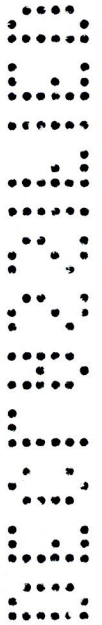
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WOULD BE TROUBLEMAKERS. NOT ONLY DO WE FEAR THAT THE TROUBLEMAKERS WILL PICK UP THE GAUNTLET AND THROW IT BACK, BUT WE ARE DEEPLY CONCERNED THAT THIS LAST IN A SEQUENCE OF EVENTS WILL ERASE WHAT LITTLE CREDIBILITY THE CHOI GOVERNMENT HAS CONCERNING ITS POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION PROGRAM. MAYBE OUR VISCERAL ACTIONS WILL PROVE EXCESSIVE. IN THE INITIAL STAGES, STUDENT FEAR OF CONFRONTING TROOPS MAY DETER THEM FOR AWHILE; AND IT IS STILL POSSIBLE THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL COUPLE ITS MAILED FIST WITH SOME OF THE MORE LIBERAL MEASURES MENTIONED BY CHOI KWANG SOO (M-R: CH'OE KWANG-SU) EARLIER THIS AFTERNOON (SUCH AS

IT IS HARD TO SEE, HOWEVER, HOW ANY GOVERNMENT ACTION WILL REKNIT THE SHREDDED FABRIC OF CHOI'S POLITICAL PROGRAM.

6. OUR FIRST REACTION TO THESE EVENTS HAS BEEN ONE OF FRUSTRATION. ON THE ONE HAND WE ARE MINDFUL OF PROVOCATION TO THE MILITARY AUTHORITIES FROM THE EVENTS OF THE PAST WEEK--WHERE TENS OF THOUSANDS OF STUDENTS RESPONDED SWIFTLY TO THE CALLS OF ORGANIZED STUDENT LEADERS WHO REMAINED OBSCURELY IN THE BACKGROUND WITHOUT REVEALING THEIR ULTIMATE MOTIVATION. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE MILITARY LEADERS HAVE SHOWN DISREGARD FOR CONSTITUTED AUTHORITY IN THE ROK--AND FOR US. WE HAVE BEEN PRESENTED WITH A FAIT ACCOMPLI SUGGESTING THAT THE MILITARY LEADERS



BIAS

the old "people pulling strings" image

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EITHER DO NOT KNOW OR CARE ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES OF
TREATING US IN THIS MANNER.

7. THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT WE ARE FACED WITH AN EX-

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-- C. ELIEVE I SHOULD BE INSTRUCTED ON THE HIGHEST AUTHORITY TO CALL ON PRESIDENT CHOI AND PROBABLY THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE AND MARTIAL LAW COMMANDER TO MAKE A REPRESENTATION ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES: THE USG IS DEEPLY DISTRESSED BY THE DECISIONS TAKEN IN SEOUL ON MAY 17 BECAUSE WE FEEL THEY UNDERMINE THE CREDIBILITY OF THE LEGALLY CONSTITUTED GOVERNMENT, FRUSTRATE THE PEOPLE'S HOPE FOR DEMOCRATIC EVOLUTION, RAISE THE THREAT OF CIVIL STRIFE, AND SERIOUSLY INCREASE THE DANGER OF NORTH KOREAN INTERVENTION; THE USG IS DOUBLY DISTURBED THAT THESE ACTIONS WERE TAKEN WITHOUT ANY ADVANCE NOTIFICATION TO THE USG AND APPARENTLY WITHOUT MUCH REGARD FOR CIVILIAN AUTHORITY; THE USG HAS ISSUED A STATEMENT, PARA 11 BELOW; WE WILL NOT DO ANYTHING TO INFLAME THE SITUATION OR UNDERMINE THE ROK'S DEFENSE BUT THE ROKG SHOULD BE ON NOTICE THAT WE WILL BE ENTERING A VERY DIFFICULT PERIOD IN OUR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP; WE HOPE THAT THE ROKG WILL LIMIT THE DAMAGE BY AVOIDING EXCESSIVE ACTIONS OF CONTROL AND BY DOING EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO ENSURE CONTINUED MOVEMENT TOWARD POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION.

-- D. WE INTEND TOMORROW TO ISSUE A TRAVEL ADVISORY TO URGE THAT AMERICAN CITIZENS WITH NON-ESSENTIAL BUSINESS

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STAY AWAY FROM KOREA FOR THE TIME BEING, AND WE WILL SO INFORM THE ROKG.

-- E. IF THERE HAS BEEN NO IMPROVEMENT IN THE SITUATION BY MID-WEEK, WE WILL RECOMMEND THAT THE EXIM BANK, OPIC, NEW ORLEANS, AND PENNSYLVANIA TRADE MISSION VISITATIONS BE POSTPONED ALONG WITH ALL OTHER SIMILAR VISITS.

10. ONCE WE HAVE A BETTER VIEW OF THE SITUATION WE WILL PROBABLY RECOMMEND A PRESIDENTIAL LETTER AND POSSIBLY ONE ALSO FROM SECRETARY BROWN TO THE MILITARY. IN THESE LETTERS AND IN ALL OUR ACTIONS WE WILL HAVE TO EXERCISE GREAT CARE IN STATING OUR CONCERNS IN WAYS THAT DO NOT ANTAGONIZE LARGE NUMBERS OF KOREANS IN ADDITION TO THE MILITARY NAUGHTS OR FURTHER UNDERMINE OUR INFLUENCE. I REGRET TO SAY AT THIS POINT OUR INFLUENCE APPEARS DISTURBINGLY LIMITED.

11. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF SUGGESTED STATEMENT:

WE ARE DEEPLY DISTRESSED BY THE IMPOSITION OF EMERGENCY MARTIAL LAW THROUGHOUT THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA, THE CLOSING OF SCHOOLS, AND THE ARREST OF POLITICAL AND STUDENT LEADERS. WE ARE MAKING CLEAR TO THE KOREAN GOVERNMENT THE SERIOUSNESS OF OUR CONCERN.

WE URGE ALL ELEMENTS IN KOREAN SOCIETY TO ACT WITH



*Brown letter to military
did it materialize?*

