

TEXT OF TELEGRAM 80SEJUL 006660

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ADS-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00
SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 HA-05 ACDA-12 IO-14 SY-05
SYE-00 OC-06 CCO-00 AID-07 PC-01 OPR-02 A-02
OMR-01 OCS-06 CA-01 ANAE-00 /112 W
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O 260807Z MAY 80
FM AMEMBASSY SEJUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6565
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO
SA CINCUNC KS
CHJUSMAG SEJUL KS
COMUSKOREA SEJUL KS//BJ-IS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 SEJUL 06660

E.O. 12065: GDS 05/26/86 (CLARK, WILLIAM) OR-P
TAGS: A SEC PINS KS
SUBJECT: KOREAN SITREP, 1500, MONDAY, MAY 26, 1980

REF: SEJUL 6644

1. (C - ENTIRE TEXT)

2. SITUATION IN KWANGJU: DURING THE COURSE OF SUNDAY,
MAY 25, EVENTS IN KWANGJU TOOK A SHARP TURN FOR THE WORSE.
THERE WERE REPORTS OF VIGILANTE GROUPS, RECOVERY BY
RADICALS OF WEAPONS TURNED IN EARLIER, AND EVEN OF
PEOPLE'S COURTS AND EXECUTIONS. (THESE HAVE NOT BEEN
CONFIRMED AND SHOULD BE TREATED WITH CAUTION.) ALL LINES
OF COMMUNICATION AND SUPPLY INTO KWANGJU REMAINED CUT OFF.
TV NEWSFILMS, SHOT FROM HELICOPTER AND SHOWN ON GOVERNMENT
CHANNEL AT 9:00 P.M., MAY 25, SHOWED PEOPLE COOKING OVER
OUTDOOR FIRES AND TRUCKS AND JEEPS WITH ARMED MEN ABOARD
MOVING THROUGH STREETS. EARLY MAY 26, 200,000 PEOPLE WERE
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REPORTED "MILLING," BUT THIS HAS BEEN DISCOUNTED IN LATER
REPORTING.

3. AT 2100, MAY 25, A LENGTHY MARTIAL LAW "ANNOUNCEMENT"
WAS BROADCAST DESCRIBING THE SITUATION IN KWANGJU (REF:
FBIS SK 251405). ACCORDING TO THE ANNOUNCEMENT, AFTER
SIGNS OF A SETTLEMENT, STUDENT HARDLINERS DECIDED MAY 24
TO "STRUGGLE TO THE END." ON THE MORNING OF MAY 25, THERE
WAS CONFLICT BETWEEN THESE RADICALS AND MODERATES WITH

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

RELEASE DECLASSIFY
 EXCISE DECLASSIFY
 DENY IN PART
 DELETE Non-Responsive Info
FOIA Exemptions _____
PA Exemptions _____

IS/FPC/CDR TRB Date: 9/13/93
MR Cases Only:
EO Citations _____

TS authority to:
 CLASSIFY as S or C OADR
 DOWNGRADE TS to S or C OADR

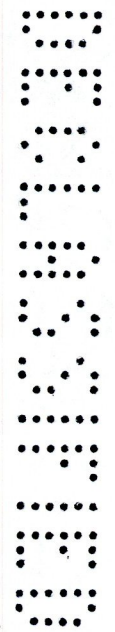
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Seoul MAY 26
midnight?

I AM D.C. time



MANY KILLED AND INJURED. THEREAFTER, RADICAL STUDENTS TOOK OVER MAJOR PUBLIC BUILDINGS, WARNED CITIZENS OF A PROTRACTED BATTLE AND CREATED A "WARLIKE ATMOSPHERE." THUS, "GRIPPED BY UNEASINESS AND HORROR, MOST OF THE CITIZENS OF KWANGJU ARDENTLY DESIRE THE GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES TO RESTORE ORDER." IN THE TEXT OF THE STATEMENT THERE IS REFERENCE TO CASUALTIES CAUSED BY "THE ATROCITIES OF STABBING BY THE TROOPS."

4. AROUND 2300, MAY 25, A SPEECH BY PRESIDENT CHOI, JUST RETURNED FROM THE KWANGJU AREA, WAS BROADCAST (FBIS SK 251428). HE URGED STUDENTS TO RETURN TO THEIR HOMES, CALLED FOR DIALOGUE, WARNED OF THE NORTH, PROMISED REHABILITATION AND, AND STATED THAT ORDER WOULD HAVE TO BE RESTORED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. THE OVERALL TONE OF THE SPEECH WAS REASONABLE AND CONCILIATORY. THE SPEECH WAS BROADCAST AGAIN DURING THE MORNING OF MAY 26.

5. WE HAVE LITTLE INFORMATION FROM KWANGJU AT PRESENT, ONLY THAT LARGE NUMBERS OF CITIZENS ARE REPORTEDLY GATHERING IN THE DOWNTOWN AREA. THERE ARE REPORTS, INCLUDING FOREIGN NEWS REPORTS, THAT PRESIDENT CHOI HAS SET A MIDNIGHT DEADLINE FOR RESTORATION OF ORDER IN THE CITY OR TROOPS WILL MOVE IN. THERE HAVE BEEN MANY RUMORS THAT
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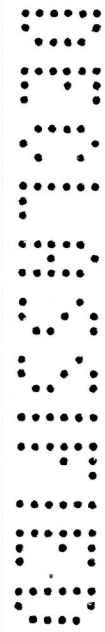
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TROOPS BEGAN MOVING EARLY A.M. MAY 26 (E.G. KYODO REPORT THAT MARTIAL LAW TROOPS MOVED INTO THE CITY BEHIND TANKS AT 0800 TODAY, BUT RETREATED 50 MINUTES LATER). ROK OFFICIAL SOURCES HAVE DENIED SUCH MILITARY MOVEMENT THOUGH WE KNOW 20TH DIVISION AND SPECIAL FORCES BATTALIONS ARE POSITIONED

6. KOREAN AUTHORITIES HAVE EXPLAINED TO US THAT BLOODY FIREFIGHTS YESTERDAY BETWEEN ARMY TROOPS AROUND KWANGJU WERE CAUSED BY MISTAKEN IDENTITIES AND GREEN TROOPS. ONE INCIDENT INVOLVED DIRECT HIT BY ARMY RECOILLESS RIFLE ON APC CONTAINING ARMY TROOPS.

7. GEN. WICKHAM HAS MET WITH THE MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENSE, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF, THE MARTIAL LAW COMMANDER AND THE DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF ARMY REGARDING THE PORTRAYAL BY KBS IN KWANGJU OF THE U.S. POSITION TO KWANGJU RESIDENTS AS ONE IN SUPPORT OF THE USE OF TROOPS. AMBASSADOR ALSO COMPLAINED STRONGLY TO BLUE HOUSE. IN ALL CASES THERE WAS CONCERN EXPRESSED OVER THIS INACCURATE PRESENTATION AND AN UNDERTAKING TO INVESTIGATE PROMPTLY. JCS CHAIRMAN LEW INFORMED US THAT THE KBS BROADCAST WAS A ONE-TIME ACTION TAKEN BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES WITHOUT PROPER AUTHORIZATION.

8. CONDITIONS IN SEOUL AND THROUGHOUT THE REST OF THE



LEW

COUNTRY REMAIN OSTENSIBLY NORMAL. THERE IS OBVIOUS DEEP CONCERN ABOUT THE SITUATION IN KWANGJU BUT, SO FAR NO OVERT DEMONSTRATION OF SYMPATHY FOR THE RADICALS. THERE HAVE BEEN REPORTS OF A POSSIBLE DEMONSTRATION BY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TODAY OR BY SOME UNIVERSITY STUDENTS. AS A RESULT, THE COMBAT POLICE ARE MORE VISABLE IN THE CITY. THERE ARE NO PAPERS ON MONDAY MORNINGS.

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