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SECTION 01 OF 02

SUBJECT: THIS IS IR

"THIS IS AN INFO REPT, NOT FINALLY EVALUATED INTEL"

1. (U) CTY: REPUBLIC OF KOREA (KS)
2. (U) IR NBR:
3. (U) TITLE: MILITARY ATTITUDES TOWARD RECENT ROK
POLITICAL SITUATIONS (U)
4. (U) NO.
5. (U) DTD OF INFO: 791010
6. (U) DTD OF REPT: 791015
7. (U) DTD & PL AQN: 791010,

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PAGE 2

9. (U) ASSESSMENT: B 2

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11. (U) REQ EVAL: NO

12. (U) PREPARING OFFICER:

13. (U) APPROVING AUTHORITY:

14. (U) ROK MILITARY & CIVILIAN OFFICIALS

15. (U) SP INSTR: RESTRICTIVE CAVEATS USED TO PROTECT AN
DIRC: NO.

16. SUMMARY: THIS REPORT SUMMARIZES THE COMMENTS OF TWO ROK FIELD GRADE OFFICERS CONCERNING THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE ROK ARMY IN POLITICAL MATTERS IN LIGHT OF RECENT ANTI-GOVERNMENT STUDENT ACTIVITIES. IT ALSO PROVIDES INFORMATION CONCERNING MILITARY CONCERN THAT THE OUSTER OF ((KIM)) YONG SAM MAY HAMPER SUCCESS OF THE UPCOMING SECURITY CONSULATIVE MEETING (SCM) OR RETARD US-ROK SECURITY COOPERATION IN GENERAL. THE KIM YONG SAM CASE IS APPARENTLY BEING DISCUSSED FAIRLY OPENLY IN MILITARY CIRCLES, AND SOME FEEL THE GOVERNMENT MAY HAVE COMMITTED A TACTICAL BLUNDER BY HIS OUSTER.

DETAILS:

(COMMENTS ARE PARAPHRASED AND OCCURED PRIOR TO KIM YONG SAM'S OUSTER.

(1) "ONE OF THE BASIC PRECEPTS OF THE KOREAN ARMY, LIKE THE US ARMY ARE ESSENTIALLY POLITICAL IN NATURE. SINCE THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT ORIGINALLY CAME TO POWER IN A MILITARY COUP, SOME WESTERNERS TEND TO THINK OF THE KOREAN ARMY AS BEING HEAVILY ORIENTED TOWARD POLITICAL ACTIVITY BUT, THIS IS NOT THE CASE. IN THE 1962 COUP, THE ROK INTERNAL SITUATION HAD BADLY DETERIORATED AND THE ARMY, WAS THE ONLY DISCIPLINED AND ORGANIZED INSTITUTION AVAILABLE, HAD TO TAKE ACTION TO RESTORE ORDER TO THE GOVERNMENT AND AVOID FURTHER DISINTEGRATION AND POSSIBLE COMMUNIST TAKEOVER. NOWADAYS THE SITUATION IS MUCH DIFFERENT.

(2) THIS OFFICER COULD ONLY ENVISION THE ARMY GETTING INVOLVED IF THE SITUATION DEGENERATED COMPLETELY INTO VIRTUAL CHAOS.

8. SOURCE OF THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS IS A [REDACTED] ASSIGNED TO [REDACTED] WHO HAS IN

PAGE 2

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PAGE 3

THE PAST MADE COMMENTS CRITICAL OF THE PRESIDENT, THE ROK ARMY GENERAL CORPS, AND THE ROK ARMY PROMOTION POLICIES. (COMMENTS WERE MADE PRIOR TO KIM YONG SAM'S OUSTER, BUT DURING STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS. COMMENTS ARE PARAPHRASED.)

(1) " THE ROK ARMY REPRESENTS THE PEOPLE AND COULD NEVER FIRE ON STUDENTS. IF A SITUATION EVER DEVELOPS WHERE THE NATIONAL POLICE CANNOT CONTROL A STUDENT DEMONSTRATION, THE GOVERNMENT WOULD PROBABLY FALL BECAUSE THE ARMY CANNOT BE COUNTED ON TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST STUDENTS. THE ARMY'S JOB IS TO FIGHT COMMUNISTS AND DEFEND THE COUNTRY, NOT TO FIGHT STUDENTS.

THIS SHOULD BE PUT INTO PERSPECTIVE. IF THE NATIONAL POLICE CANNOT CONTROL A DEMONSTRATION, CERTAIN ARMY ELEMENTS WOULD BE USED AND WOULD PROBABLY BE EFFECTIVE. BEST CANDIDATES ARE 5TH SF BOE AND ELEMENTS OF CAPITAL SECURITY COMMAND AND/OR CAPITOL CORPS. I THINK THESE UNITS COULD BE COUNTED ON TO COUNTER STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS BUT IF IT CAME TO SHOOTING STUDENTS OR CITIZENS THE POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY BE SEVERE. (THE ABOVE COMMENTS ARE ONLY SPECULATIVE AND SHOULD IN NO WAY BE CONSTRUED TO MEAN THAT THE PRESENT SITUATION IS IN ANY WAY CRITICAL.)

C. SOURCE OF THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS IS A CIVILIAN INTELLIGENCE OFFICER WITH CONTACTS IN THE DEFENSE SECURITY COMMAND AND DAILY CONTACT WITH ROK MILITARY PERSONNEL. (COMMENTS WERE MADE ON 9 OCTOBER, AFTER THE KIM YONG SAM OUSTER, AND ARE PARAPHRASED FOR CLARITY.)

(1) " THE KIM YONG SAM OUSTER IS BEING WIDELY DISCUSSED THROUGHOUT THE MILITARY, JUST AS IT IS IN THE CIVILIAN

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MAC 117

PAGE 3

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SECTION 02 OF 02

COMMUNITY. THIS IN ITSELF IS SOMEWHAT UNUSUAL. THE GENERAL FEELING IS THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS MADE A TACTICAL BLUNDER BY OUSTING KIM, SINCE BEFORE HE WAS ONLY A MARGINALLY EFFECTIVE OPPOSITION LEADER BUT NOW MAY ACHIEVE MARTYR STATUS. SOME FEEL THAT THE GOVERNMENT MAY HAVE LOST FACE SINCE EVEN "KOREAN-STYLE" DEMOCRACY TOLERATES AN OPPOSITION; APPARENTLY NOW THAT IS NO LONGER TRUE. (2) "THERE IS ALSO SOME CONCERN IN THE MILITARY THAT THE KIM YONG SAM INCIDENT MAY ADVERSELY EFFECT THE SCM OR RETARD SECURITY COOPERATION BETWEEN THE US AND ROK AT A TIME WHEN THE TROOP WITHDRAWAL ISSUE HAS ONLY RECENTLY BEEN (FAVORABLY IN KOREAN EYES) RESOLVED." SOURCE WAS OF THE PERSONAL OPINION THAT THE GOVERNMENT (PRESUMABLY MEANING THE PRESIDENT) HAD RECEIVED BAD ADVICE ON THE KIM

PAGE 2

YONG SAM MATTER.

(3) HE ALSO SPECULATED THAT CAPITAL SECURITY COMMAND CG, MG ((CHON)) SONG KAK WOULD BE PROMOTED VERY SOON TO LTG AND REASSIGNED TO A CORPS COMMAND ONCE THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN SEOUL RETURNED TO NORMAL.

MG CHON HAS PREVIOUSLY BEEN CONSIDERED A FRONT RUNNER FOR A THIRD STAR AND CORPS COMMAND. SOURCE THINKS HE MAY BE PROMOTED IMMEDIATELY BUT REMAIN IN HIS PRESENT POSITION UNTIL THE SITUATION IN THE CAPITAL IS CALM.

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MAC 117

PAGE 2

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