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Date: 9/13/92

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John Hayes
10/13/92

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E.O. 12265:GDS 11/6/85 (GLEYSSTEEN, W.M.) DR-M
TAGS: POCV, PEPR, KS, US
SUBJECT KOREA FOCUS - CONGRESSMAN WOLFF'S PROPOSAL FOR
HEARINGS

1. (U) ENTIRE TEXT.
2. I UNDERSTAND CONGRESSMAN WOLFF WISHES TO PROCEED WITH HEARINGS ON THE KOR LEADERSHIP CRISIS -- A REVIEW OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES LEADING TO PRESIDENT PARK'S ASSASSINATION, THE PROSPECTS FOR SUCCESSION AND U.S. POLICY IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES.
3. ~~I AM SURE THAT PUBLIC HEARINGS ON THE KOREAN SITUATION WOULD CAUSE CONSTERNATION, IF NOT ALARM, AMONG MANY KOREANS, AND NOT JUST THE KOREAN GOVERNMENT. THEY WOULD NOT SEE WHY PUBLIC HEARINGS WERE NECESSARY AT THIS STAGE FOR AMERICAN PURPOSES, AND THEY WOULD CONSIDER HEARINGS UNHELPFUL IN TERMS OF THEIR INTEREST OF MAINTAINING CALM AND AVOIDING UNNECESSARY CONTROVERSY. PUBLIC AMERICAN COMMENTS, ESPECIALLY OFFICIAL TESTIMONY, COULD STIMULATE SUSPICIONS IN KOREA. STATEMENTS ABOUT FUTURE LEADERSHIP PROSPECTS COULD INTERJECT US INTO THE MIDST OF EXTREMELY DELICATE POLITICAL MANEUVERS IN SEUL. PUBLIC HEARINGS~~

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PAGE 12

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WOULD APPEAR INCONSISTENT WITH OUR ASSURANCES REGARDING RESTRAINT IN PUBLIC CRITICISM OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT.

4. I AM SURE THAT PUBLIC HEARINGS WOULD TOUCH ON CHARGES OF U.S. COMPLICITY IN THE DEATH OF PARK CHUNG HEE. AS I TOLD THE CONGRESSMEN AND SENATORS WHO WERE PRESENT AT THE BRIEFING, THERE WAS NO COMPLICITY AND EVEN OUR CRITICISMS OF PRESIDENT PARK WERE ACCOMPANIED BY PRIVATE AND PUBLIC INDICATIONS THAT WE WOULD CONTINUE COOPERATION WITH HIS GOVERNMENT FOR SECURITY, ECONOMIC AND OTHER REASONS. YET EVEN IF WE WERE TO SAY THIS AT PUBLIC HEARINGS, I FEAR THE HEARINGS WOULD DEEPEN SUSPICION THAT WE HAD BEEN A PARTY TO PARK'S DEATH. THIS ALLEGATION IS A COMMUNIST CANARD AND I HOPE WE WILL GO OUT OF OUR WAY TO AVOID GIVING IT ANY PUBLICITY.

5. HEARINGS CONDUCTED IN EXECUTIVE SESSION WOULD POSE FAR LESS OF A PROBLEM. GLEYSTERN

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