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TEXT OF TELEGRAM 80STATE 135008

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ORIGIN EA-12

INFO OCT-00 ADS-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-10
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DRAFTED BY EA/K:R G RICH:AG
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TAGS: PGOV, KS.

SUBJECT: PRESS STATEMENT ISSUED BY SENATOR KENNEDY

1. WE ARE QUOTING BELOW PRESS STATEMENT BY SENATOR
KENNEDY WHICH WAS RELEASED TODAY, MAY 22.

BEGIN QUOTE:

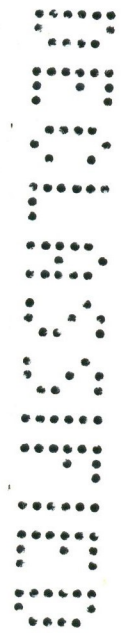
I AM DEEPLY CONCERNED BY THE SEVERE MILITARY CRACKDOWN IN THE
REPUBLIC OF KOREA, WHICH REPRESENTS A SERIOUS
REVERSAL OF THE INITIALLY HOPEFUL TRENDS TOWARD LIBERALIZA-
TION FOLLOWING PRESIDENT PARK'S DEATH LAST OCTOBER.

LESS THAN FIVE MONTHS AFTER LIFTING THE PARK REGIME'S
HATED EMERGENCY MEASURE NUMBER NINE, SOUTH KOREAN
AUTHORITIES HAVE ADOPTED MARTIAL LAW DECREE NUMBER TEN.
THIS NEW, REPRESSIVE DECREE EXTENDS MARTIAL LAW TO THE
ENTIRE COUNTRY; ALL POLITICAL ACTIVITIES AND GATHERINGS
ARE PROSCRIBED; LABOR STRIKES ARE BANNED; THE UNIVERSITIES
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AND THE HEADQUARTERS OF BOTH MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES ARE
CLOSED; CRITICISM OF THE GOVERNMENT IS FORBIDDEN; AND THE
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY IS PREVENTED FROM CONVENING. EQUALLY
DISTURBING, MORE THAN 100 RELIGIOUS, STUDENT, AND POLITICAL
LEADERS HAVE BEEN ARRESTED, INCLUDING OPPOSITION LEADERS

KIM DAE JUNG AND KIM YOUNG SAM AND FORMER PRIME MINISTER
KIM JONG PIL.



TWO MONTHS AGO, I EXPRESSED MY SUPPORT FOR CONTINUED POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION IN KOREA. BUT, AT THE SAME TIME, I WARNED OF THE DANGER POSED BY THE SOUTH KOREAN MILITARY UNDER THE COMMAND OF GENERAL CHON TOO HWAN. TRAGICALLY, THESE WARNINGS PROVED WELL-FOUNDED, AND ANY HOPES FOR THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY IN KOREA ARE NOW IN DOUBT.

PRESIDENT CHOI KYU HAH HAS PROMISED THAT THE "POLITICAL EVOLUTION PROGRAM" WHICH HE ANNOUNCED LAST DECEMBER "WILL PROCEED WITHOUT CHANGE." THE SOUTH KOREAN GOVERNMENT SHOULD MOVE PROMPTLY TO END MARTIAL LAW, REPEAL MARTIAL LAW DECREE NUMBER TEN, AND RELEASE ALL THOSE UNDER ARBITRARY ARREST.

IN ADDITION TO THESE URGENT STEPS, I STRONGLY ENCOURAGE THE SOUTH KOREAN GOVERNMENT TO COMPLETE ITS PROGRAM OF POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION NO LATER THAN THE END OF THIS YEAR. I WOULD ESPECIALLY WELCOME THE RETURN OF GOVERNMENTAL POWER TO CIVILIAN CONTROL, THE LIFTING OF PRESS CENSORSHIP, THE RELEASE OF ALL REMAINING POLITICAL PRISONERS, LEADING TO ENACTMENT OF A DEMOCRATIC CONSTITUTION, FREE AND OPEN ELECTIONS, AND THE FORMATION OF A BROADLY-REPRESENTATIVE CABINET.

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THE WILLINGNESS OF THE SOUTH KOREAN GOVERNMENT TO CARRY OUT THESE STEPS WILL BEAR DIRECTLY UPON THE FUTURE COURSE OF OUR RELATIONS. ONLY BY SUPPORTING A MORE LIBERAL AND OPEN POLITICAL SYSTEM FOR THE KOREAN PEOPLE CAN WE HELP TO ASSURE THE LONG-TERM STABILITY AND WELL-BEING OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA. END QUOTE. MUSKIE

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