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RELEASED IN PART 1.4(D)

PAGE 01 STATE 117573 ORIGIN NODS-00

INFO OCT-00 ADS-00 /000 R

DRAFTED BY EA/K:R G RICH:AG APPROVED BY EA:R CH HOLBROOKE EA:M H ARMACOST

S/S:RSEITZ

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DECAPTIONED

CHEROKEE

E.O. 12065: RDS-3 AND 4, 5/2/00 (HOLBROOKE, RICHARD)

TAGS: MARR, PINT, KS, US

SUBJECT: SELF-DECEPTION BY THE ROK MILITARY

1. (S) ENTIRE TEXT.

- 2. WE HAVE A NUMBER OF INDICATIONS THAT A PROCESS IS AGAIN UNDERWAY IN WHICH THE ROK MILITARY, WHEN FACED WITH UNPLEASANT POLICY NEWS FROM THE USG'S AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVES TURNS TO "FRIENDS" AMONG THE ACTIVE AND RETIRED U.S. MILITARY AND PERSUADES ITSELF THAT THE COMPATIBLE RESPONSES IT THUS HEARS REPRESENT THE "REAL" U.S. POLICY, AND THAT THEREFORE THE VIEWS VOICED BY THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR (AND CINCUNC AND THE STATE DEPT) CAN BE DISCOUNTED.
- 3. WE ARE INFORMED THAT FORMER GENERAL CHOI KYONG-NOK (WHO HAS JUST RETURNED TO SEOUL AND WITH WHOM YOU HAVE JUST HAD SECRET

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LUNCH) AND GENERAL JOHNNY SOHN HERE HAVE ALREADY BEEN GLEANING SUCH SOUNDINGS AND HAVE CONVEYED SUCH VIEWS TO GENERAL CHUN.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE REVIEW AUTHORITY: CHARLES E LAHIGUERA CLASSIFICATION: SECRET REASON: 25X6 DECLASSIFY AFTER: 3 MAY 2030 DATE/CASE ID: 27 JUN 2005 200501785

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- 4. TO A DEGREE THIS PROCESS IS INEVITABLE AND AS OLD AS THE US-ROK POSTWAR RELATIONSHIP. HOWEVER, WE WILL WORK WITH YOU TO BLUNT ITS IMPACT, AND TRY BOTH TO ENSURE THAT USG POLICY MESSAGES ARE HEARD LOUDLY AND CLEARLY AND THAT YOU AND GENERAL W-CKHAM ARE FULLY BACKED AT CRITICAL JUNCTURES.
- 5. AN IMMEDIATE CONCERN IS A TRIP TO KOREA WHICH WE UNDERSTAND GENERAL STILWELL WILL MAKE IN THE NEXT TEN DAYS. WE WILL TRY TO TALK TO STILWELL BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE, BUT WE ARE INFORMED THAT HE HAS ALREADY DISCOUNTED PRESENT US POLICY TO THE TWO KOREAN GENERALS MENTIONED ABOVE, AND HAS LED THEM TO INTERPRET PRESENT POLICY JUST AS A "STATE DEPT" PLOY WHICH CAN BE BYPASSED OR TURNED AROUND.

7. IN ADDITION TO OUR EFFORT TO TALK WITH STILWELL HERE, I HOPE YOU WILL BE ABLE TO MAKE CONTACT WITH HIM THERE AND THAT EITHER YOU OR GENERAL WICKHAM WILL BE ABLE TO PERSUADE HIM OF THE FUNDAMENTAL IMPORTANCE OF OUR PRESENT POSTURE AND THE PARALLEL IMPORTANCE THAT THE ROK MILITARY NOT RECEIVE CONFLICTING INTERPRETATIONS FROM WHICH THEY WILL TYPICALLY CHOOSE THE MOST CONGENIAL. NEWSOM

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