INCOMING TELEGRAM

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ACTION NODIS-84

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SECRET SECTION 01 OF 05 SEOUL 83W39

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CORRECTED COPY (TEXT - PARA 4)

E.O. 12065/RODS-3 3/12/89 (GLESTEEEN, M.H.) OR

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, PINS, MILIT, KS

SUBJECT: YET ANOTHER ASSESSMENT OF ROK STABILITY AND

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

1. (S) ENTIRE TEXT.

2. BEGIN SUMMARY: THE PROSPECTS FOR STABILITY AND DE-

MOCRATIC-MINDEDNESS IN THE ROK DURING 1989 ARE FAIR, AL-

THOUGH THE YEAR WILL GET ROUGHER RATHER THAN EASIER AS THE

YEAR CHURNS ON. THE STUDENTS COULD PROVE SPURIOUS, BUT

CIVIL UNREST WILL PROBABLY BE HELD IN CHECK. DISSIDENTS

HAVE NOT FOUND THEIR BALANCE IN THE FACE OF A GOVERN-

MENT WHICH IS RELAXING RESTRICTIONS, WHILE POLITICIANS ARE BE-

HINDING CIRCUMSTANCES FOR FEAR OF PROVOKING THE MILITARY

AND DESTROYING THE OPPORTUNITY FOR POLITICAL PROGRESS.

FOR THE SHORT TERM WORKERS MAY TAKE A TEMPORARY REDUCTION

IN REAL INCOME RATHER THAN RESORT TO STRIDENT DEMANUS AS

A RESPONSE TO DEPRESSED ECONOMIC CONDITIONS. THE GOVERN-

MENT IS OPERATING WITH ENOUGH COMPETENCE TO COPE WITH THE

NATION'S PROBLEMS -- AT LEAST TO THE POINT OF NOT PRO-

VIDING A CONVENIENT EXCUSE FOR THOSE WHO MIGHT WISH TO

TERMINATE ITS PROGRAM OF "ORDERLY DEMOCRATIZATION."
3. The odds of an early military coup seem to have receded — in part because military officers are coming to understand the complexity of Korea's economy, the delicacy of Korea's foreign relationships, and the quite apparent consensus of most Koreans opposing a direct military role in politics. The threat of early internecine strife within the ROK army does not seem as great as a few weeks ago — largely because of the substantial shift of key troop commanders and awareness that the USG would not support an effort to upset the current equilibrium.

4. Within the control structure, a particularly important phenomenon is the great power of Chun Doo Hwan, who has spread his intelligence security net throughout the military structure, and, despite flat assurances against involving himself in politics (as he defines politics), gives the impression of a man biding his time to take over control of the government either directly or behind some facade. Should he try to extend his formal power to include the K CIA or manipulate the structuring of the next elections, he could precipitate dangerous public unrest and reactivate stresses within the ROK army — even his December 12 collaborators might turn on him.

5. Another source of serious concern is the depth of distrust of the senior military leadership toward Kim Young Sam and Kim Tae Chung. Since this cannot be erased in the short time before elections, the military will be tempted to join a bureaucratic/business coalition to prejudice the contest and possibly to refuse to accept the results if the NNP should win. Fortunately, some senior officers recognize that the army would jeopardize its secret.
POPULAR SUPPORT IF IT WERE TO ENGAGE IN CRUDE MANIPULATION
BEFORE AN ELECTION OR ATTEMPT TO TOPPLE A POPULARLY
ELECTED NPD-LED GOVERNMENT -- AT LEAST BEFORE IT HAD
BLOTTED ITS COPYBOOK.

6. HOPEFULLY PRESIDENT CHOI AND HIS GOVERNMENT WILL BE
ABLE TO CARRY THROUGH CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT AND DIRECT
ELECTIONS MORE OR LESS AS PLANNED WITH A RESULTING GOVER-
MENT THAT IS SOMEWHAT MORE LIBERAL THAN THE PREVIOUS ONE.
CONCEIVABLY THE CONTEST WILL BE A STRAIGHTFORWARD ONE
BETWEEN THE NPD AND ORP KIMS, BUT GIVEN THE NUMBER OF
BUREAUCRATS, BUSINESSMEN, AND SOLDIERS WITH AN INTEREST
IN THE OUTCOME, THEY MAY TRY TO INJECT OTHER PLAYERS IN
THE RACE AND GIVE THEM SPECIAL ADVANTAGES. ALTHOUGH SUCH
A MOVE MIGHT DISTURB ROUSSEAU DEMOCRATS, WE SHOULD NOT
JUMP TO THE CONCLUSION THAT IT WOULD SIGNAL THE RETURN OF
YUSHIN OR BE UNACCEPTABLE TO THE KOREAN PUBLIC. END
SUMMARY.

7. THE JUXTAPOSITION IN LOCAL MEDIA OF NEWS ABOUT KIM
TAE CHUNG'S RECENT RETURN TO POLITICS AND CHUN DOO HWAN'S
PROMOTION TO LIEUTENANT GENERAL CONJURES UP CONTRASTING
PICTURES OF KOREA. THE FIRST IS OF A COUNTRY PROCEEDING
MORE OR LESS ON SCHEDULE WITH PROMISES OF POLITICAL EVOLU-
TION AND HEADED -- RATHER UNBELIEVABLY -- FOR TRANSFORMATION
FROM THE AUTHORITARIAN ONE-MAN RULE OF THE YUSHIN ERA TO A
FULLY DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM IN NOT MUCH OVER ONE YEAR. THE
SECOND MORE SINISTER PICTURE FOCUSES ON CHUN DOO HWAN'S
GRADUAL AGGRANIDIZATION OF POWER TO THE POINT WHERE MANY
FEEL HE ALREADY CONTROLS BASIC GOVERNMENT POLICY. HE HAS
ON THE BATTLE OVER HIS THIRD STAR, EXTENDED HIS INTEL-
LIIGENCE SECURITY NET THROUGHOUT THE ARMED SERVICES BY
MEANS OF A COMMISSAR SYSTEM, AND SET ABOUT DEALING WITH ALL

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KINDS OF PEOPLE IN A MANNER SUGGESTIVE OF A NATIONAL LEADER RATHER THAN SECURITY OFFICER. GENERALLY, HE GIVES THE IMPRESSION OF A MAN BIDING HIS TIME TO TAKE OVER POWER — EITHER DIRECTLY OR BEHIND A CIVILIAN FACADE. BOTH PICTURES PORTAY IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF SOUTH KOREA'S CONTEMPORARY REALITY. ULTIMATELY THE INHERENT CONTRADICTIONS WILL HAVE TO BE RESOLVED; YET NO ONE KNOWS EXACTLY HOW AND WHEN THIS WILL OCCUR, AND MOST PEOPLE'S JUDGMENT IS COMPROMISED BY UNCERTAINTY, IGNORANCE, AND RUMOR-MONGERING.

8. HOW STABLE IS SOUTH KOREA?

GRANTING THAT THE TOUGHER TESTS LIE AHEAD, THE PROSPECT FOR STABILITY AND DEMOCRATIC-MINDEDNESS THROUGH 1984 ARE NOT BAD. THE ODDS OF A DANGEROUS DISRUPTION, SUCH AS A MILITARY COUP OR MASSIVE STUDENT/WORKER UPRISING DO NOT SEEM HIGH. AMONG THE MILITARY, THE PROSPECT OF COUNTERACTIONS WITHIN THE ROK ARMY AGAINST THE DECEMBER 12 GROUP HAS RECEIVED WITH THE ASSIGNMENT OF NEW (AND FOR THE MOST PART COMPETENT) OFFICERS INTO KEY TROOP COMMANDS. IN RETROSPECT, HOWEVER, THOSE OFFICERS WHO PRODUCED OUR REACTION TO POSSIBLE COUNTERACTION APPARENTLY HAD FEW TOOLS AT THEIR MEAN DISPOSAL. DISGRUNTLED FORCES ARE NOT LIKELY TO GAIN THE UNREST SECRET

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DEVELOPS. DESPITE HIS FLAT ASSURANCES TO THE CONTRARY, CHUN DOO HWAN MAY TRY TO EXTEND HIS STRING-PULLING HOLE FROM THE MILITARY TO THE ENTIRE GOVERNMENT AND SOCIETY, BUT HOPEFULLY WILL STOP SHORT OF CAUSING FEAR AND ANTAGONISMS OF DANGEROUS PROPORTIONS.

9. ON THE CIVIL SIDE, KOREAN SOCIETY WILL PROBABLY BE ABLE TO CONTAIN THE POTENTIAL THREAT FROM STUDENTS WHO ARE SO SELF-CONSCIOUS ABOUT THEIR "HISTORICAL ROLE" AND OFTEN INSENSITIVE TO THE DANGERS OF EXCESS. OTHER POTENTIAL SOURCES OF UNREST SEEM EITHER OFF BALANCE OR CHASTENED BY FEAR OF MILITARY INTERVENTION. DISSIDENTS ARE GROPPING RATHER UNSUCCESSFULLY FOR TARGETS TO ATTACK. POLITICAL OPPOSITION LEADERS -- IN FACT ALL POLITICAL LEADERS -- ARE CUSTRIED BY LATENT THREATS AND PREOCCUPIED BY INTERNECINE WARFARE, WHILE WORKERS AND OTHERS WHO CREATED TROUBLE AT THE TIME OF THE BUSAN/MASAN RIOTS SEEM PREPARED TO ACCOMMODATE TO KOREA'S VERY DIFFICULT ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES BY TAKING SOME REDUCTION IN REAL INCOME RATHER THAN TAKING TO THE STREETS.

10. WHO IS REALLY IN CHARGE?

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TIAL AND AUTHORITATIVE THEY ARE LIKELY TO BE, THE POWER
OF THE POLITICIANS IS STILL MARGINAL, BUT IT WILL PRO-
BABLY INCREASE AS THE COUNTRY HEADS TOWARDS MORE DECISIVE
STAGES OF CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT AND ELECTIONS. THE
BUSINESS COMMUNITY IS HUNKERED DOWN, WORRYING ABOUT "PURI-
FICATION" (ANTI-CORRUPTION) CAMPAIGNS AND TEMPTED TO BUY
ITS WAY INTO POLITICAL OPERATIONS IN THE STYLE OF EARLIER
ERAS.

11. HOW WELL IS THE SYSTEM FUNCTIONING?

THE GOVERNMENT SYSTEM HAS LOST EFFICIENCY, DISCIPLINE, AND
MOMENTUM, BUT IT IS STILL RUNNING PRETTY WELL -- PARTICULAR-
LY IF COMPARED WITH OTHER COUNTRIES OR MEASURED AGAINST
THE MAGNITUDE OF CHALLENGE. PRESIDENT CHOI UNFORTUNATELY
ALLOWS HIMSELF TO BE SEEN AS A FLabby, HYPERCAUTIOUS
LEADER CONTENT WITH FORMAL RULE PLAYING, EXCEPT FOR PRO-
FORMA APPEARANCES, HE TENDS TO KEEP THE MILITARY AT ARM'S
LENGTH, AVOIDING ARGUMENT AND CONFRONTATION. HIS GOVERN-
MENT HAS NOT APPEARED DECISIVE, AND RUMORS OF BUSINESS
CORRUPTION AND GENERAL LOOSENING OF STANDARDS ARE PREVA-
LENT. HOWEVER, THESE IMPRESSIONS OVERLOOK THE FACT THAT
THE CHOI GOVERNMENT HAS CONDUCTED THE FIRST STAGE OF
POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION WITHOUT LOSING CONTROL AND HAS
BEEN FAR MORE DECISIVE THAN MANY ASSUMED -- POLITICALLY,
LIFTING EM-6 AND ALLOWING KIM TAE CHUNG BACK ON THE SCENE;
ECONOMICALLY, IN CARRYING THROUGH DEVALUATION AND ENERGY
PRICE INCREASES; AND SOCIALLY, IN MAKING CHANGES IN CAMPUS
ADMINISTRATION WHICH WERE OPPOSED BY THE GUARDIANS OF LAW

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12. WHAT ARE THE STRATEGIES OF KEY PLAYERS?

ALTHOUGH THE CHOI GOVERNMENT HAS COMMITTED ITSELF TO A
PROGRAM OF "UNDERLY DEMOCRATIZATION" WITH POPULAR ELEC-
TIONS WITHIN THE FIRST HALF OF 1981, MANY PEOPLE -- MYSELF
INCLUDED -- ARE WORRIED THAT THE PROCESS WILL BE JEO-
PARDIZED OR SERIOUSLY COMPROMISED. TO PUT THE PROBLEM
SIMPLY: PREVAILING OPINION IS THAT THE NOP WOULD SLEEP
ANY ELECTION CONDUCTED IN THE NEAR FUTURE BECAUSE OF A
NATURAL REACTION TO THE YUSHIN PERIOD; THE MILITARY LEADER-
SHIP VIEW THE PROSPECT OF A NOP-CONTROLLED GOVERNMENT
WITH SOMETHING BETWEEN DEEP APPREHENSION AND A DETERMINA-
TION TO PREVENT IT; WHILE ALMOST EVERYBODY AGREES THAT
THE KOREAN PEOPLE WOULD BE DEEPLY ANTAGONIZED BY EITHER
A MILITARY TAKEOVER IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES OR CHAOS
MANIPULATION OF POPULAR ELECTIONS, NO KOREAN KNOWS HOW
THIS DILEMMA IS GOING TO BE MANAGED. THE BEST THEY CAN DO
IS TO SORT OUT POSSIBLE SCENARIOS AND CALCULATE THEIR OWN
POTENTIAL ROLES -- WHICH ULTIMATELY WILL BE DETERMINED BY
THE EMERGING PATTERN OF OTHERS' ACTIONS.

(A) THE MILITARY
THERE ARE TWO GREAT PROBLEMS AMONG MILITARY OFFICERS GENERALLY. FIRST, THE UNDISGUISED DISTUST OF ALL SENIOR MILITARY OFFICERS -- PRE- AND POST-DECEMBER 12 HIERARCHIES AS WELL AS RETIRED OFFICERS -- TOWARD KIM TAE CHUNG (BECAUSE OF HIS ALLEGED SUFINESS AND LEFTISM) AND KIM YONG SAM (BECAUSE OF HIS ALLEGED GENERAL INADEQUACY).

A DISTURBING NUMBER STATE FLATLY THAT THEY WOULD NOT PERMIT EITHER KIM TO COME TO POWER AND WOULD MOVE TO PREVENT IT IN ADVANCE OF AN ELECTION OR BY COUP AFTER THE ELECTION.fortunately, OTHERS RECOGNIZE THAT THE ARMY COULD DESTROY ITS CRUCIAL RAPPORT WITH THE CIVILIAN POPULATION IF IT WERE TO ARBITRARILY ANNUL THE RESULTS OF A MAJORITY DECISION. SECOND, KOREAN MILITARY OFFICERS VIEW THE PROCESS OF "DEMOCRATIZATION" THROUGH A YUSMIN FILTER, MAKING IT DIFFICULT FOR THEM TO TOLERATE THE DEGREE OF FREE CHOICE AND CRITICISM ASSOCIATED WITH A MODICUM OF DEMOCRACY. DESPITE THESE POWERFUL PREDISCUENCES, I CONCLUDE HESITANTLY THAT THE MILITARY HIERARCHY RECOGNIZES WITH SUFFICIENT REALISM THAT A PRE-ELECTION COUP WOULD PIT THE ARMY AGAINST THE PEOPLE IN AN UNACCEPTABLE WAY. IT WOULD BE STRONGLY ATTRACTION TO ANY POLITICAL ARRANGEMENT WHICH MIGHT REDUCE THE PROSPECT OF AN NDP VICTORY; AND, IF THE NDP WERE NEVERTHLESS TO COME INTO POWER, HUMER OR LESS UNDERSTANDS THAT THE NDP -- POSSIBLY EVEN KIM TAE CHUNG -- WOULD HAVE TO BE GIVEN TIME TO PROVE ITSELF CAPABLE OR INCAPABLE OF GUIDING THE ROK. IN THE BEST OF CIRCUMSTANCES, THE THREAT OF MILITARY INTERVENTION WILL REMAIN A DAMOCLES SWORD OVER KOREA'S POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT FOR SOME TIME.

(P) CHUN YOO HWAN

WE -- AND I SPECIFICALLY INCLUDE MYSELF -- SHOULD RESIST SECRET
OVERSIMPLIFYING KOREAN POLITICS BY MAKING CHUN DUO MAN
THE SINISTER SOURCE OF ALL EVIL. HE HAPPENS TO BE ONE OF
A NUMBER OF KOREANS WHOSE PERSONAL DECISIONS COULD PROVE
FATEFUL FOR THEIR COUNTRY. FOR THE SHORT RUN, HE IS
STRONGLY CONstrained FROM OPENLY VIOLATING HIS ASSURANCES
ABOUT NOT INTERVENING IN POLITICS, AND SO FAR HE HAS
WORKED TO CONTROL RATHER THAN STIMULATE THE KIND OF UN-
REST THAT MIGHT JUSTIFY EXTENSION OF HIS POWER. YET
Even IF HE CONTINUES TO BIDE HIS TIME, HE WILL WILL
POWER THAT MAKES almost EVERYONE UNCOMFORTABLE. IN
STRUCTURING THE NEXT ELECTION, HE MIGHT PLAY A VERY CHANCE
ROLE BUT HE MIGHT CONTENT HIMSELF WITH PLAYING THE ROLE
OF A BACKSTAGE MENTOR IF HE COULD FIND A COMBINATION OF
POLITICIANS BOTH WILLING TO FRONT FOR HIM AND ABLE TO WIN
AN ELECTION. MAKING TIME WILL NOT BE WITHOUT PROBLEMS
FOR CHUN BECAUSE HIS OPPONENTS MAY SEEK TO EMBARRASS OR
DESTROY HIM, ESPECIALLY IF HE MISPLAYS HIS CARDS. HE IS
ALREADY WIDELY FEARED AND within THE ARMY EVEN HIS COL-
LABORATORS OF DECEMBER 12 MIGHT FEEL BETRAYED IF HE WERE
TO REACH OUT FOR OVERT POLITICAL POWER. CLEARLY HE IS
GOING TO CONTINUE TO BE ONE OF OUR MAIN PROBLEMS.

(C) THE PRESIDENT AND PRIME MINISTER:

THE PRIME MINISTER HAS TOLD ME QUITE CANDIDLY THAT HE AND
THE PRESIDENT BELIEVE THAT MUCH CONFUSION WILL DEVELOP
LATER THIS YEAR WHEN THE NPD AND YRP WILL DISCOVER THAT
NONE OF THE KMS IS A SHOO-IN FOR THE KMS NEXT PRESIDENT.
THUS THE GOVERNMENT'S STRATEGY IS TO GOVERN AS EFFECTIVE AS
POSSIBLE AND TO ALLOW A POLITICAL STALEMATE TO DEVELOP

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BEFORE SUGGESTING A SOLUTION, ONE SOLUTION APPARENTLY APPEALING TO THE PRIME MINISTER, IF NOT THE PRESIDENT, WOULD BE TO ENTER THE RANKS AS A SUPER-PARTISAN CANDIDATE IN THE ELECTIONS. THIS WOULD BE EASIER IF THE NOP AND URP WERE BOTH FRAGMENTED BY THIRD PARTY ACTIVITIES, AND THE GOVERNMENT MAY HOPE THAT KIM TAE CHUNG WILL OBLIGE FROM ONE SIDE WHILE SOME BUREAUCRAT/BUSINESS/MILITARY GROUP OBLIGES FROM THE OTHER. I SENSE THE PRIME MINISTER WOULD READILY ENTER THE FRAY IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES, BUT I CREDIT HIM FOR BEING UNWILLING TO SERVE AS A FRONT FOR A MILITARY CAGAL AND RECOGNIZING THAT HE WOULD HAVE TO WIN IN A FAIR ELECTION. MOST OF THE ESTABLISHMENT WOULD BE REASSURED WITH SUCH A PATERNALISTIC ARRANGEMENT IF ONLY THEY COULD FIGURE OUT HOW TO CONVINCE THE VOTERS. IN THE MEANTIME, THE PRESIDENT AND PRIME MINISTER SEEM RELATIVELY CONFIDENT THAT THEIR SCHEDULE FOR POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION AND ELECTIONS CAN BE MAINTAINED. LIKE THE MILITARY, THEY HAVE IN MIND A MORE CONSERVATIVE CONCEPT OF DEMOCRACY THAN MUCH OF THE URBAN PUBLIC AND THEY MAY ADOPT A MORE INTERVENTIONIST RULE THAN MANY PEOPLE THINK FAIR FOR AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT.

(0) THE ORP AND KIM JONG PILI

KIM JONG PILI RECOGNIZES THAT HIS CURRENT PROSPECTS FOR AN SECRET

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ELECTION VICTORY ARE POOR BUT HE OBVIOUSLY HOPES THAT
WITH TIME HE WILL HAVE A CIGARTING CHANCE TO WIN. HE WILL
WORK ASSIDUOUSLY TO ENCOURAGE FRACURES IN THE OPPPOSITION
AND TRY TO REPAIR THE DPK'S IMAGE THROUGH POLICIES DE-
IGNED TO APPEAL TO FARMERS AND THE URBAN POOR. ABOVE ALL
HE WILL EXPLOIT HIS ADMINISTRATIVE EXPERIENCE AND HIS
RELATIVELY GREATER ACCEPTABILITY TO THE MILITARY THAN
EITHER OF THE NDP KIMS. NEVERTHELESS, KIM JONG PIL WILL
BE A LONG SHOT UNLESS THE ESTABLISHMENT RALLIES AROUND
HIM, WHICH THEY HAVE NOT SO FAR. HE HAS THE LIABILITIES
OF PAST CORRUPTION, CLOSE ASSOCIATION WITH YUSHIN, AND
POWERFUL ENEMIES WITHIN THE DNP. MANY MILITARY OFFICERS
SEE HIM SIMPLY AS PREFERABLE TO THE NDP KIMS AND NOTHING
MORE.

E. NDP KIM YUNG SAM AND KIM TAE CHUNG

THE NDP'S RATHER UNQUESTIONED ADVANTAGE IS THAT IT WOULD
PROBABLY WIN DECISIVELY IF A POPULARITY CONTEST WERE CON-
DUCTED IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, AND ITS GREAT LIABILITY
IS THE UNDISGUISED DISLIKE OF THE MILITARY LEADERS
(THOUGH NOT NECESSARILY THE TROOPS). ALTHOUGH NEITHER
KIM YONG SAM NOR KIM TAE CHUNG HAS LET MUNHY OVERRIDE
HIS AMBITION, NDP LEADERS KNOW VERY WELL THAT A PARTY
SPLIT WOULD KEEP POWER OUT OF THEIR GRASP. TO A LESSER
EXTENT THERE ARE GLIMMERINGS OF AWARENESS THAT OVER TIME
THE NDP MAY BE FORCED TO DEMONSTRATE MORE CONVINCINGLY
THAN IN THE PAST THAT IT IS CAPABLE OF INTELLIGENT POLI-
CIES AND EFFICIENT ADMINISTRATION, NOT JUST OPPOSITION
FIREWORKS.

THE STRATEGIES OF THE TWO KIMS REFLECT THESE CONSIDER-
ATIONS. THEY ARE PLAYING RATHER RUDDILY WITH EACH OTHER
SECRET
BUT ARE AT LEAST TRYING NOT TO SPLIT THE PARTY WHILE THEY BOTH BLAME ALL ILLS ON THE CHOI GOVERNMENT AND ARGUE THAT KIM JONG PIL CAN NEVER ESCAPE HIS YUSMIN ASSOCIA-
TION. NEITHER KIM HAS YET DARED TO PURSUE THE CORRUPTION ISSUE WHICH REACHES WITHIN THEIR OWN RANKS, AND, IN A
STRIKING BREAK FROM THE PAST, BOTH HAVE COMMENDABLY RE-
FRAINED FROM INFLAMING PUBLIC PASSIONS OR SNIPING AT
SENSITIVE ISSUES SUCH AS POLICY TOWARD THE NORTH/SOUTH
KOREAN DIALOGUE. THE IMAGE MAKERS OF BOTH KIMS ARE WORKING
ON THE PROBLEM OF "POLICY-MINDEDNESS" AND KIM JONG SAM
HAS AT LEAST TRIED TO IMPROVE HIS MILITARY TIES. HIS
EFForts SO FAR HAVE NOT MADE MUCH OF A dent. KIM TAE
CHUNG HAS TAKEN THE PLOW STAND THAT HE IS READY TO
CONSULT WITH THE MILITARY IF THEY TAKE THE INITIATIVE,
PREASSURABLY AN INDICATION THAT HE EITHER FAILS TO UNDER-
STAND HIS PROBLEM OR IS TOYING WITH A DANGEROUS KIND OF
CONTEST. THE NWP WILL PROBABLY AVOID A "OVERHEATED"
APPROACH FOR A FEW MORE MONTHS TO BUILD UP THE IMAGE OF
SOBRIETY, TO AVOID BEING CHARGED WITH ENDANGERING THE
PROSPECTS FOR CONTINUING CIVILIAN RULE, AND TO SORT OUT
THE LEADERSHIP CONTEST WITHIN THE PARTY. AT SOME POINT,
HOWEVER, IT WILL ALMOST SURELY TAKE OFF THE GLOVES EVEN
AT THE RISK OF A CRACKDOWN BY THE AUTHORITIES.

13. UNLESS THE STUDENTS OR OTHERS GET OUT OF HAND,
KOREA IS LIKELY TO REMAIN FAIRLY STABLE FOR THE NEXT FEW
MONTHS BECAUSE: THE SOLDIERS KNOW THE PEOPLE WOULD NOT
ACCEPT A MILITARY TAKEOVER; GENERAL CHUN HAS PAINTED
HIMSELF INTO A CORNER IN TERMS OF EXTENDING HIS FORMAL
POWERS; THE POLITICIANS KNOW THAT THEIR GRADUALLY EXPRAND-

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ING CONTEST IS AT THE SUFFERANCE OF MARTIAL LAW AUTHORITIES; THE CHUJ GOVERNMENT KNOWS IT HAS THE CENTRAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR PREVENTING CHAOTIC DEVELOPMENT; AND THE GENERAL POPULACE SEEMS MORE OR LESS SATISFIED OR AT LEAST UNWILLING TO MANIFEST ITS UIKHAPINESS BY DRAMATIC ACTION. THE DISPOSITION OF THE KIM JAE KYU CASE AND THE LIFTING OF MARTIAL LAW WILL BE TRICKY, BUT THE CHUNGH POINTS WILL BE THE FINAL STAGE OF CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT AND STRUCTURAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE NEXT ELECTIONS. THE CHANCE OF VERY SERIOUS CONTROVERSY OVER THESE ISSUES IS GREAT, MAGNIFIED BY A STAGGERING DEGREE OF REGIONAL ANTIMONITY. HOPEFULLY GENERAL CHUN AND LIKE-MINDED MILITARY OFFICERS WILL RESTRAIN THEMSELVES WHILE POLITICIANS WORK OUT COMPROMISES THAT WILL ALLOW AT LEAST SOME PROGRESS IN THE CURRENT ROK EXPERIMENT IN POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION. WHATEVER THE OUTCOME, WE SHOULD BE GRATEFUL THAT SOUTH KOREA HAS MAINTAINED ITS BASIC COHESION AND WILL PROBABLY CONTINUE TO DO SO.

GENERAL NICKHAM CONCURS IN THIS ASSESSMENT.

RECOMMENDATION ON POLICY FOLLOW SEPTEMBER.

DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS TOKYO GLEYSIEN SECRET.