

INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

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Info

RR RUEHCR
DE RUALOS 07E 07/2310Z
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FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO RUEHCR/SECSTATE WASHDC
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PARIS 5 MARCH 7, 7 PM.

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NIJ 92-161

By Jul, NARA, Date 6-30-92

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REF: A) DEPTTEL 785. B) EMBTEL 1117.

1. FORMER PRIME MINISTER KIM HYON-CHOL (JUST BACK FROM AROUND-THE-WORLD TRIP) BROACHED IDEA OF OFFER OF ROK FORCES FOR SERVICE IN VIETNAM IN INFORMAL AFTER DINNER CONVERSATION LAST WEEK. OCCASION WAS DINNER GIVEN BY ROK FOREIGN MINISTER CHONG IL-KWON IN KIM'S HONOR; OTHERS PRESENT WERE MINISTER CFN 1128 11 44 504 7 7PM FIVE 785 1117 1. KIM HYON-CHOL CHONG IL-KWON

PAGE TWO RUALOS 07E ~~SECRET~~
NATIONAL DEFENSE KIM SONG-UN, MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO KIM YONG-SIK, AND SECRETARY NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL SONG SUK-HA.

2. KIM HYON-CHOL SAID IF US AGREEABLE ROKG MIGHT BE PREPARED OFFER THREE TO FOUR THOUSAND TROOPS FROM ROK ARMY TO ASSIST USG AND GVN IN CARRYING WAR TO NORTH VIETNAM.

3. I INQUIRED IF THIS WAS CONSIDERED PROPOSAL OF ROKG AND WAS TOLD THAT NO OFFICIAL POSITION HAD BEEN ADOPTED BY ROKG. THIS CONFIRMED LATER IN WEEK BY FONMIN WHO TOLD ME KIM'S SUGGESTION WAS FIRST HE HAD HEARD ON SUBJECT.

4. KIM SAID OF COURSE AGREEMENT OF UNC WOULD HAVE TO BE OBTAINED FOR RELEASE OF TROOPS FOR SERVICE OUTSIDE ROK. I COMMENTED THAT PROVISION BY ROK OF TROOPS FOR SERVICE IN VIETNAM MIGHT

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Korean

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PCrane:bhm
(Drafting Office and Officer)

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Memorandum of Conversation

Korean vol. 2

Nemos 7/64-

8/65 254

DATE: May 17, 1965 Korea
5:00 p.m.

The White House
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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NLI 89-92

By sig NARA. Date 8-29-89

SUBJECT: U.S.-Korean Relations

PARTICIPANTS: President Johnson
President Chung Hee Park of Korea
Mr. Sang Ho Cho, President Park's interpreter
Dr. Paul Crane, President Johnson's interpreter

COPIES TO:	FE/VN	AmEmbassy TOKYO	S/P
	INR	" SAIGON	
White House	G/PM	CINCPAC	
S/S	AID/FE	CINCPAC for POLAD	
FE	OSD/ISA	G	
EA	AmEmbassy SEOUL	INR/OD	

President Johnson said that the U.S. planned to extend all possible aid to Korea. It planned to keep its troops there, and no reduction of troop strength was contemplated. However, if there were an adjustment, President Park would be the first to know about it, and full consultation would be held beforehand.

President Johnson congratulated Park on the happy progress of the Korea-Japan negotiations and said that he considered President Park to be the chief ingredient in the success of these negotiations. He felt that it was due to Park's leadership that things had been going so well. He realized that it had been a very tough and touchy problem. He felt that conclusion of the Korea-Japan treaty would also assist our mutual effort in Viet-Nam. President Park said he felt that the Korea-Japan negotiations could be concluded within a month, by early or middle June. He said that there were certain irresponsible people who were trying to block the negotiations, but he felt his public relations and other efforts would ensure conclusion of the agreement.

President Johnson congratulated President Park on his assistance in the struggle in Viet-Nam, and said ~~that Korean aid to Viet-Nam would mean that there would be kept~~ in Korea a military strength equivalent to that at present so that, in accordance with our commitments under the 1954 treaty, Korean security would not suffer.

with reference to that aid, that
we would keep

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GPO 865971

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Crane:bhm
(Drafting Office and Officer)

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Copy for: The White House

5-17-1965
Approved by White House
5/28/65

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The White House

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8-29-89

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1 Crane, Vol. 2 Cables

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President Johnson then emphasized how much more difficult it was now to get aid through Congress than it had been 20 years ago when the aid program first began. He said that the 2,000 Korean troops that had been sent to Viet-Nam in his opinion had helped save the aid bill in Congress. He asked President Park whether he felt additional Korean troops could be sent to Viet-Nam from Korea. President Park stated that the Korean Government would have to study that matter. The people in Korea were worried whether they might not invite further activity from North Korea if they weakened the line by sending too many troops to Viet-Nam. However, he said that he personally would like to send more troops to Viet-Nam. President Johnson then asked President Park if he could send one division. If President Park could raise the commitment to one division, this would help a great deal in the struggle there. President Park repeated that it was his personal feeling that Korea could make larger commitments of troops to Viet-Nam, but this would have to be studied by his Government, and he could not make a commitment on it at this time.

President Johnson said that at the present time he was searching for a diplomatic solution in Viet-Nam. He also hoped that eventually there could be a solution to the problem of the unification of Korea; but this would have to be done under the UN formula of UN supervision of free elections.

President Johnson said he wanted to tell the Korean Government that aid would be assured to that country and that the U.S. would finance essential imports and development loans, technical assistance, and food for peace. The impression the American Government had of Korea had never been better. After his visit to Korea, Dr. Rostow had reported great progress in the economic field.

[President Johnson reiterated that Park's leadership had helped him very much in his dealings with Congress on aid problems. The critics of the aid program always were trying to point out that aid did not produce results; but Park's Government and its stand in Viet-Nam was a very strong indication that aid could be well used in building up strong allies.]

President Park said he hoped very much that there would be no indication from Washington that there would be any withdrawal of UN troops from Korea. This sort of talk made it very difficult for him to help in Viet-Nam, because his own people became very disturbed any time there was any talk of withdrawal of UN troops from Korea. President Johnson referred to the strong support in the Congress for his Viet-Nam program and said he would see to it that Korea's security is ensured, that troops and money enough will be provided to ensure this in accordance with the 1954 treaty. He said that, if any troops were to be removed from Korea, it would only be done with prior consultation.

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- 3 -

President Johnson said he believed that, if they can get an agreement or some basis for agreement in South Viet-Nam, this would also relieve the pressure from North Korea. He hoped that the Australians, the Filipinos, and New Zealanders would all help in Viet-Nam and he also hoped to get a Korean division into Viet-Nam so that they could get a total of 70,000 to 80,000 troops in Viet-Nam from various nations to be able to win there.

On the status of forces agreement President Johnson stated that Ambassador Brown was working on that problem and that we would follow the same formula as was used in Germany. This had worked very well in Germany and should work well in Korea. He was glad the negotiations were going ahead well; but he did not think they could be concluded during this State Visit. President Park said that he thought these negotiations had gone on too long and were becoming a major irritant to many of his people, particularly the Opposition. He hoped President Johnson would break into the negotiations with an order to somehow bring them to a speedy conclusion.

President Park said 1967 was the last year of his first economic development program and that a second five-year development program was planned. Koreans would need continued assistance from the U.S. to help them with this. President Johnson spoke of the \$100 billion foreign aid which the U.S. had given since World War II to countries overseas and the 160,000 U.S. casualties which we have suffered since World War II. He said there were many people in Congress who had opposed spending this \$100 billion. The way that some countries acted made it very difficult to get aid out of Congress. He said that when Sukarno burns USIA libraries and offices, people in Congress are of a mind to cut off all foreign aid. He considered Korea's conduct very helpful. He said that Park's policy in Korea went all the way in backing up the Viet-Nam effort, and again he stated that this was a great help to him and that it improved the military situation in Viet-Nam.

Asked whether the Koreans had asked any other nations in Asia to help out in Viet-Nam, President Park said no they had not. President Johnson said the U.S. feels the same way about its commitments in Viet-Nam and Korea, and feels that Korea has been the greatest assistance in helping to bring pressure to bear so that other countries like Australia and New Zealand would come in. Britain, he realized, was very much occupied in Malaysia. The President concluded by repeating the hope that Korea would increase its commitment to one division.

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73. Telegram From the Embassy in Korea to the Department of State¹

Seoul, January 21, 1966, 1010Z.

757. Troops for RVN. Ref: (A) Deptel 703;² (B) Emb A-272;³ (C) Emb A-275;⁴ (D) Emb A-276;⁵ (E) COMUSK 5436;⁶ (F) Embtel 758.⁷

1. CT feels that we have now progressed as far as we can in separate discussions with MND and DPM. FonMin reports that both are dissatisfied and are advising President that US responses to date inadequate to justify favorable decision. President, DPM, MND and FonMin are leaving Feb 7 for two weeks and target dates of April and July for arrival of new forces in RVN are receding rapidly. Time has therefore now come to try to bring matter to a head and seek decision from President who basically favorable and is neither accurately nor objectively informed by either MND or DPM.

2. It is unnecessary to elaborate theme that this early request for doubling ROK forces in RVN, coupled with fact that acceding to it will, at best, involve some temporary degradation present ROK military strength at home (Deptel 703 para 2),⁸ presents President Pak with genuine political problem which we must help him meet.

¹ Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL 27-3 VIET S. Secret; Priority; Limdis. Repeated to the Department of Defense, Joint Chiefs of Staff, CINCPAC for POLAD, Tokyo, and Saigon.

² See footnote 2, Document 69.

³ In airgram A-272 from Seoul, January 17, the Embassy forwarded copies of a January 13 letter from the Korean Minister of National Defense to General Beach detailing Korean requests submitted in exchange for providing additional troops for Vietnam. (National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL 27 VIET S)

⁴ See footnote 3, Document 71.

⁵ Airgram A-276 from Seoul, January 19, transmitted copies of General Beach's reply to the Korean requests submitted on January 13. A copy of the airgram without attachments is in National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL 27 VIET S.

⁶ Not found.

⁷ Telegram 758 from Seoul, January 21, contained the Embassy's draft letter to Pak explaining the terms the United States was prepared to offer in exchange for a Korean division and brigade for Vietnam. (National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, POL 27-3 VIET S)

⁸ In paragraph 2 of telegram 703 to Seoul, January 8, the Department of State instructed Brown to explain to Korean officials that by meeting the U.S. objective of sending a brigade by April and a division by July to Vietnam "it may be necessary for the ROK to accept some temporary lessening of TE of the ROK active forces in Korea until shipments of equipment and supplies can reach Korea for the activation of reserve units, the reconstitution of support and service elements, and the reconstitution of ready reserve units." The United States would, however, provide the needed equipment as soon as possible. (Ibid., POL 27 VIET S)

3. We feel that a definitive offer should now be presented. If there is to be any chance of favorable decision even by President Pak before Feb 7, it should be as generous as possible. Our concept of that offer is set forth in draft letter to FonMin (Ref F), as supplemented by General Beach's letter to MND of Jan 18 (Ref D encl).

4. This offer will involve solid amounts of money. Amounts so paid here, however, are as directly spent for the prosecution of the war in RVN as those spent for maintenance of our own forces there. But for categories of accounting they would be charged to RVN and would be swallowed up in the cost of that great effort. In any event, if we are to get an extra division and brigade we must be prepared to pay for them. The amounts involved, while substantial, are small in comparison with the cost of doing the job ourselves.

5. I propose to hand this offer to the Foreign Minister, if and as soon as you approve it, hopefully early next week, stressing stakes involved and need for early ROK decision, before President leaves if possible. While chances of President's submitting matter to Assembly before he leaves on Feb 7 is diminishing as each day passes, it would be very desirable to get favorable decision by President before Feb 7 in order to permit necessary military planning to proceed within government during his absence.

6. ROKs may well come back with assertion that they need more. As a fall-back position CT recommends that we be prepared, if it will clinch the deal, to add a 25 percent increase in per diem for ROK forces in RVN.

7. Would appreciate Washington approval soonest, so we can expedite decision here.⁹

Brown

⁹ In telegram 758 to Seoul, January 22, the Department concurred with most of the Embassy's recommendations. The major points of divergence involved the amount of death and disability payments to be paid and a potential increase of 25 percent in the per diem rate paid to ROK troops serving in Vietnam. (Ibid.)