Date Printed: 01-Nov-1999

HANDLING: EXDIS

DOC NBR: 1979STATE322415

SECRET

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ORIGIN SS-15

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DRAFTED BY: EA/K: JLGOSNELL APPROVED BY: EA/K: RGRICH

S/S-O:JBECKER

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P 180400Z DEC 79 FM SECSTATE WASHDC INFO RUHQHQA/ CINCPAC HONOLULU HAWAII PRIORITY 5236 CINCUNC SEOUL PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 322415

EXDIS MILITARY ADDEES HANDLE AS SPECT EXCLUSIVE

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FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 322415 ACTION BEIJING TOKYO INFO SEOUL MOSCOW SECDEF WASHDC DEC 14

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E.O. 12065: RDS-2 AND 3, 12/14/89 (HOLBROOKE, RICHARD)

TAGS: MPOL, PINR, KN, KS, CH, JA

SUBJECT: POTENTIAL RISK OF NORTH KOREAN MILITARY ACTION AGAINST SOUTH KOREA

FOR AMB MANSFIELD AND CHARGE ROY FROM HOLBROOKE

1. SECRET - ENTIRE TEXT.

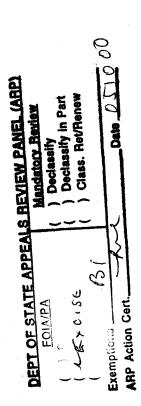
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2. THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY IS URGENTLY TAKING A NEW LOOK AT THE RISK OF NORTH KOREAN MILITARY ACTION AGAINST





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THE SOUTH IF RECENT EVENTS IN THE ROK SHOULD LEAD TO A FURTHER SCHISM WITHIN THE ROK ARMY OR AN UNRAVELING OF COMMAND AND CONTROL CONFIDENCE OVER AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF SEVERAL WEEKS. IN ADDRESSING THIS QUESTION, WE ARE MINDFUL THAT PYONGYANG MIGHT THINK AT THIS TIME THAT THE USG IS SO HEAVILY ENGAGED IN A CRISIS IN THE NEAR EAST THAT OUR ATTENTION AND RESOURCES MIGHT BE DIVERTED FROM NORTH ASIA TO A SIGNIFICANT DEGREE.

3. WE HAVE FOUND THE RECENT DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE DEPART-MENT AND ADDRESSEE POSTS REGARDING

TO BE MOST USEFUL, BUT WOULD LIKE ANY FURTHER INSIGHTS AND ASSESSMENT YOU CAN EACH OFFER FROM YOUR OWN VANTAGE POINTS AT THIS TIME ON THE NORTH KOREAN QUESTION AND ON LEVERAGE WHICH YOUR HOST GOVERNMENT MIGHT HAVE OR BE ABLE TO EXERCISE TO DETER AGGRESSION.

4. FOR CHARGE ROY ESPECIALLY: I CALL YOUR ATTENTION TO

SEEMS TO US TO BE A STRONGER EXPRESSION OF CHINESE ASSURANCES ON NORTH KOREA THAN WE HAVE YET DETECTED. AMONG OTHER COMMENTS, I WOULD APPRECIATE KNOWING WHETHER YOU FEEL THIS IN ANY WAY AFFECTS YOUR ASSESSMENT IN BEIJING 9078 THAT THE CHINESE POSITION ON KOREA HAS NOT SHOWN ANY CHANGE. PICKING UP ON

PERHAPS YOU CAN FIND AN EARLY OPPORTUNITY TO CITE THE DISCUSSION TO A SENIOR PRC OFFICIAL TO SEE IF YOU CAN EVOKE A SIMILAR RESPONSE IN A DEFINITIVE MANNER, EXPLORING TO THE DEGREE POSSIBLE WHAT SECRET

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LIES BEHIND THE CHINESE ASSURANCES. IN TRYING HERE TO ASSESS THE DEGREE OF CHINESE LEVERAGE OVER PYONGYANG, PETROLEUM HAS BEEN MENTIONED. IS THIS REALISTIC?

5. FOR ALL -- I WOULD APPRECIATE IT IF YOU COULD PROVIDE US WITH YOUR BEST INSIGHTS BY MONDAY A.M. IN WASHINGTON, WITH ANY FOLLOW-UP AFTERWARD AS INFORMATION BECOMES AVAILABLE. CHRISTOPHER

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