SECRET

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ORIGIN SS-15
INFO OCT-00 ADS-00 SSO-00 /015 R

66011
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P 180400Z DEC 79
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
INFO RUHQHA/ CINCPAC HONOLULU HAWAII PRIORITY 5236
CINCPAC SEOUL PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 322415

EXDIS MILITARY ADDEES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

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

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

QUOTE S E C R E T STATE 322415

EXDIS, MILITARY ADDEE HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

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
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
WHICH
SEEMS TO US TO BE A STRONGER EXPRESSION OF CHINESE ASSUR-
ANCES 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
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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 AVAIL-
ABLE. CHRISTOPHER

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