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NODIS **DECAPTIONED**
CHEROKEE

E.O. 12065: RDS-1 12/13/00 (GLEYSTEN, W.H.) OR-M
TAGS: PEPR, SHUM, KS, US
SUBJECT: KOREA FOCUS: SECRETARY BROWN'S KOREA VISIT --
- KIM DAE JUNG

1. (S) ENTIRE TEXT.
2. I AM GRATEFUL THAT SECRETARY BROWN WAS ABLE TO VISIT SEOUL DECEMBER 13. HIS PRESENTATION TO PRESIDENT CHUN DOO HWAN (M-R: CHON TU-HWAN) ON THE KIM DAE JUNG (M-R: KIM TAE-CHUNG) CASE WAS WELL TIMED, AUTHORITATIVE, AND FORMULATED IN THE WAY MOST LIKELY TO IMPRESS CHUN RATHER THAN ANTAGONIZE HIM.
3. I HESITATE TO READ TOO MUCH INTO THE RESULTS OF THE MEETING. ON THE ONE HAND, CHUN PLAYED UP KIM DAE JUNG'S "COMMUNIST" BACKGROUND AND ASSERTED THAT "IF THE COURT CONFIRMS THE DEATH SENTENCE, IT SHOULD BE CARRIED OUT". TAKEN AT FACE VALUE, THIS IS THE MOST DISCOURAGING THING I HAVE HEARD FROM CHUN. ON THE OTHER HAND, CHUN EMPHASIZED THAT KOREA IS DEEPLY INDEBTED TO THE U.S., THAT KOREA'S SURVIVAL DEPENDS ON ECONOMIC AND SECURITY TIES WITH THE U.S., THAT HE WAS NOT OFFENDED BY THE SECRETARY'S COMMENTS, AND THAT HE WOULD GIVE VERY CAREFUL CONSIDERATION TO OUR

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ADVICE. NEVER BEFORE HAVE I HEARD HIM MAKE THESE POINTS SO CLEARLY. THESE ENCOURAGING COMMENTS, MOREOVER, WERE REINFORCED BY MND MINISTER CHOO WHO COMMENTED LATER IN THE DAY THAT WE SHOULD PAY PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO THIS

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: CHARLES E LAHIGUERA
DATE/CASE ID: 18 JAN 2012 201101232

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4. THERE ARE AT LEAST THREE WAYS TO INTERPRET CHUN'S SOMEWHAT CONTRADICTORY STATEMENTS:

- --HE MAY HAVE TAKEN A HARD-LINE POSTURE TO IMPRESS HIS MILITARY COLLEAGUES.

- --HE MAY EXPECT THE SUPREME COURT TO LIFT THE ONUS OFF HIM BY CHANGING OR DELAYING THE DEATH SENTENCE.

- --OR HE MAY HAVE DECIDED TO GO ALONG WITH THE HARD-LINERS AND UPHOLD THE DEATH SENTENCE.

5. I SUGGEST WE NOT JUMP TO ANY CONCLUSION WITHOUT MORE EVIDENCE. FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH, I SENSED A DEGREE OF HARD-LINE POSTURING WHICH WAS NOT SURPRISING GIVEN THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE MEETING; I.E., THE KOREAN MILITARY WANTED SECRETARY BROWN'S VISIT TO SEOUL TO CONVEY A SENSE OF MILITARY NORMALCY, BUT TO GET THE VISIT THEY HAD TO PAY THE UNCOMFORTABLE PRICE OF ANOTHER REPRESENTATION ON KIM DAE JUNG. PRESIDENT CHUN MAY THEREFORE HAVE DECIDED TO SOUND TOUGH TO OFFSET THE DISTASTEFUL MESSAGE. BUT THE TOUGH TALK MAY NOT HAVE GREAT SIGNIFICANCE. IN ANY EVENT, THE THEME THAT CAME THROUGH MOST CLEARLY TO ME WAS CHUN'S EMPHASIS ON KOREA'S DEBT TO US AND HIS WILLINGNESS TO TAKE OUR VIEWS INTO ACCOUNT.

6. WHILE WE WAIT FOR MORE SUBSTANTIAL EVIDENCE, I REMAIN CONVINCED THAT WE SHOULD CONTINUE OUR POLICY OF
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PUBLIC RESTRAINT (BOTH IN FORMAL STATEMENTS AND INFORMAL WAYS SUCH AS THE LEGAL OBSERVER'S REPORT ON THE KIM TRIAL) AND USE A CARROT AND STICK APPROACH WITH PRESIDENT CHUN.

7. DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS SECRETARY BROWN IN HAWAII.
GLEYSTEN

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