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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

November 21, 1980

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CONFIDENTIAL ATTACHMENT

MEMORANDUM FOR:

Peter Tarnoff  
Executive Secretary  
Department of State

SUBJECT:

MEMCON with Kim Kyong Won

Attached for your information is a Memorandum of Conversation  
between Dr. Brzezinski and Kim Kyong Won of Korea.

Christine Dodson  
Staff Secretary

Attachment

*S*  
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the meet with a future  
to impending doom. I would  
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for quick. The  
American's  
don't want a  
long, drawn out,  
bottle to some his  
life.*

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EO 13526, Sec. 3.3  
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BY JDS NARA Date 2-10-16

*Rec'd in S/S-I  
11/24/80 - 10:00 AM  
C/S/M*

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

Subject: Summary of Dr. Brzezinski's Meeting  
with Kim Kyong Won

PARTICIPANTS: Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski, Assistant to the  
President for National Security Affairs  
Donald Gregg, NSC Staff Member for East Asia

Kim Kyong Won, Secretary General for  
the Blue House  
Kim Yong Shik, Korean Ambassador  
Park Kun Woo, Korean Counsellor

DATE, TIME November 18, 1980; 5:30 - 5:45 p.m.  
PLACE: Dr. Brzezinski's Office

After an exchange of pleasantries, Dr. Brzezinski said that he had two basic points to make, and that he would welcome a response from Kim. First, Dr. Brzezinski said that he felt that it was time for the US and Korea to place their security relationship into a broader context. Dr. Brzezinski said he felt that our relations must be viewed against the background of what has been happening in Europe and the Persian Gulf. He said that he feels that there are now three strategic zones in the world that are of key concern to the US--Western Europe, East Asia, and, more recently, the Persian Gulf. Dr. Brzezinski noted that Afghanistan and Iran are no longer buffer states in the Middle East, and that the question of security in that area has become of acute concern, since Soviet dominance of that region could directly influence the other two zones, both of which depend on the Middle East for oil. Dr. Brzezinski also spoke with concern of the Soviet use of Vietnamese proxies in Indo China, and noted that the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea could be considered a second pincer (Afghanistan being the other) aimed at cutting out Western influence and access to the Persian Gulf area. (C)

Dr. Brzezinski said that new forms of consultation between the US and Korea will have to be devised to deal with these interrelated problems, and that the question of Korea's security can no longer be thought about in isolation. (C)

For his second point, Dr. Brzezinski turned to the Kim Dae Jung case. He said that US support for the Republic of Korea will be undercut if Kim is executed. Dr. Brzezinski said that the US has a strong feeling of kinship with Korea, deriving from our strategic interests, and the history we have lived through together.

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ORIGINAL BY Dr. Brzezinski  
 DECLASSIFIED BY November 19, 2010  
EXTENDED BY Dr. Brzezinski  
REASON NSC 1.13 (a)

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He said that Korea's international reputation would be badly damaged by what would be perceived as a political, not a criminal verdict. Dr. Brzezinski said that we have kept our pressure private rather than public, out of deference to the Korean courts, but that our concern runs very high. Dr. Brzezinski said that he could not predict specifically what the damage to US-Korean relations would be, but that it would be "more than marginal." Dr. Brzezinski also said that he had indications that the incoming Reagan administration feels very much the same about the Kim case. Dr. Brzezinski said that the Japanese also are very much concerned over Kim's fate, and asked that Kim convey these views to President Chun. (C)

In response, Kim said that he fully agreed with Dr. Brzezinski's depiction of the need for a broader strategic consideration of ROK-US relations. He said that he felt that new links should be forged. Kim then turned to the subject of the Security Consultative Meeting (SCM) which has been delayed by US concern over the Kim case, and developments since December 12, 1979. Kim said that holding of an SCM during the last month of 1980 would send a strong signal to North Korea, and would also place the US-ROK security relationship in a broader context. (C)

Turning to Dr. Brzezinski's second point, Kim said that the Kim Dae Jung case was still pending in the courts, and that it would go to President Chun for final resolution some time in December. Kim said the case was complicated and sensitive, and he could not predict what Chun would do. Kim said that the Korean military was putting strong pressure on Chun to execute Kim Dae Jung, and that Chun would have to take this pressure into account, as he makes his decision. Kim said that the Western press had missed a major point, in its narrow focus on the Kim Dae Jung case; this was that Korea had come through an extraordinarily difficult year in very good shape. It had not become "another Iran," in the wake of President Park's assassination. (C)

Dr. Brzezinski responded that Korea did deserve to be congratulated for what it had achieved in many spheres. He said that no abstract American standard could be applied to other countries, but that because Korea had done so well, it would be tragic if such a record were damaged by Kim's execution. Speaking personally, Dr. Brzezinski said that the Koreans would be well advised not to let the Kim Dae Jung case develop into a "cliff hanger," where the pressures became so intense that any solution would be heavily criticized. He urged that measures be taken so that the case could be resolved sooner rather than later, and that it not be allowed to degenerate into a no-win situation. Dr. Brzezinski referred to the case of Ali Bhutto in Pakistan, noting that President Zia had not wanted to execute the man. Pressures had built up, and the case dragged along for such a length of time that the "no-win" situation developed, and Zia reluctantly authorized Bhutto's execution. Dr. Brzezinski urged that the Koreans avoid such a situation. (C)

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Kim replied that he very much appreciated the fact that the US had kept its feelings on the Kim case in private channels. He commented that the western press did not seem to be so concerned at the possible fate of the "gang of four" in the PRC. Dr. Brzezinski noted that they were being tried under a different system, and that Korea, to be consistent with its own record and international standard, should not proceed with what would be perceived internationally as a political execution. (C)

Kim passed along a letter from President Chun to President Carter, expressing regrets over results of the US election. (U)

The meeting ended after both Dr. Brzezinski and Kim expressed the hope for more meetings in the future. (U)

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