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RELEASE IN
PART
B1,1.4(D)

August 27, 1999

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8/27/99
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DECL: 08/26/09

Classified by DAS, A/GIS, DoS on 04/11/2017 ~ Class: SECRET ~
Reason: 1.4(D), B1 ~ Declassify on: 08/25/2024

MEMORANDUM TO THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Madeleine K. Albright JUKA.

SUBJECT: Night Note: North Korea and Congress

Our efforts to break through on North Korea policy will be at a critical juncture in September. I ask your help in ensuring this expected progress by preparing the way with Congress.

APPEALS PANEL
ACTION: ADDITIONAL
INFORMATION
RELEASED B1,1.4(D)

I spoke with John Podesta and Jim Steinberg today, and outlined the following:

Early in September, our diplomats may well reach agreement with the North Koreans to engage on more positive relations. We believe these meetings may result in this sequence:

[Redacted]

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Your suspension of executive authority sanctions, while reversible if the North Koreans undermine cooperation, is a major change in policy. The way must be prepared with Congress.

The Perry Report, which presents our approach, is nearly complete. We hope to have the final version to you in a matter of days. With a transmittal letter from you, we want to deliver this to Congress the week of September 13.

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Classified by Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright
Reason: 1.5 (b) and (d)

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Congress is impatient. Congress has always been skeptical of the Agreed Framework; the current appropriations process is tough, in part reflecting that skepticism. To add to this, saying the Perry process has not produced results, eight Republican House committee and subcommittee chairs have formed a North Korea policy advisory group. They have already written to George Tenet, asking for extensive intelligence holdings. Although Perry and his team have painstakingly briefed Congressional leadership and key members over the last year, many in Congress are suspicious about our intentions.

In an ideal world, we would ask you to invite key Members to the White House early in September to join you in a briefing and discussion of the policy review and suspension of sanctions. Current schedule pressure precludes this.

Therefore I ask that you call the Congressional leadership, even before the end of recess, to brief on our negotiations, inform them of our intent to suspend sanctions if those negotiations succeed, and quell doubts about the Perry Report (telling them it will be on the Hill in classified form at a date certain). I, along with other principals, would make similar calls to other Members. We would call on Congress to maintain this confidence during the diplomatic talks with the North Koreans, underway from September 7, which could bring about agreement to move ahead on engagement.

Your making these calls before your departure for APEC prepares you for your trilateral meeting with Prime Minister Obuchi and President Kim in Auckland September 12.

Later in September, I believe it is essential you meet at the White House with key Members to consult on the results of the Perry process and our negotiations just prior to your suspension of sanctions, similar to our Yellow Oval meetings.

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Mr. President, one can never know what to expect with the North Koreans. To that end, we continue to prepare for the downside if that is needed. Nonetheless, we are more hopeful than we have been in a long time about our prospects. We must put all of the pieces in place so that our Congress and our allies provide us the space and support to pursue the upside.

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