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November 24, 1980

Ed
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MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT
From : Edmund S. Muskie *ESM*

1. Korea: I met this morning with Ambassador Gleysteen, whom we brought back from Korea in order to discuss next steps on the Kim Dae Jung problem. Bill continues to believe that Kim's fate rests on a knife edge, and that the outcome will be determined by the way in which both we and the incoming Administration deal with the question. In the meantime, Bill feels, we should proceed with the rice deal, as withholding it would only undercut his efforts and create problems for innocent people in Korea. (I have sent you a separate memo on this matter.)

Chris and I are concerned with the implications for your human rights policy and record if Kim is executed and you had not spoken out. I have asked for an options paper and will shortly send you a memo with our recommendation. In the meantime, I will be sending you shortly a draft of a strong letter to President Chun on the Kim case. Gleysteen also believes that while the public signal that Reagan's people sent the Koreans was satisfactory, a private letter to Chun from Reagan is needed. (C)

Expedite

*Make it very strong
Pursue in R. Allen*

2. Arab Summit: The long-planned meeting of Arab Heads of Government opens in Amman tomorrow. [redacted] "Steadfastness Front," made up of Syria, Libya, Southern Yemen, Algeria and the PLO, will boycott the summit. [redacted] the five boycotters may stage a "counter-summit" in Tripoli. Syrian Foreign Minister Khaddam's arrival in the Libyan capital November 24 added weight to the rumors. The Lebanese, [redacted] are undecided on whether they will attend or not.

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-2-

In the preparatory meeting of Foreign Ministers Sunday it was decided to recommend that the Arab leaders publicly reject Security Council Resolution 242, calling it an "inadequate basis" of settling the Middle East dispute.

The summit is likely to denounce the Camp David Accords, criticize the Israeli/Egyptian normalization, and address the issue of increasing economic assistance to non-oil-producing Arab countries. (S)

3. Poland: We are exchanging views with the Europeans on Poland's deteriorating financial situation and Western responses. We, Treasury, [REDACTED] are preparing more detailed positions for use on the margins of the December 11 OECD meeting in Paris. We expect that Western ministers at the December 10 NATO meeting will also seek an elaboration of our position.

Meanwhile, within Poland, labor unrest is again threatening to spiral out of control. Railway workers in Gdansk and Warsaw struck for two hours today and threatened to strike again tomorrow if their demands, now escalated to include the release of an arrested Solidarity representative, are not met. This action ran counter to a Solidarity decision Saturday to forego a strike "for the good of the country." The rail workers ignored warnings in the Soviet Union that a rail strike could affect the "national and defense interests of the country."

Jan Szczepanski, a leading sociologist and Chairman of the Council of State, stopped in the Department this morning. Szczepanski was pessimistic about the situation but thought the chances of Soviet intervention were relatively small, given the costs to the Soviets. He thought Kania's days as leader might be numbered and that Kania was creating a larger opposition by removing local party secretaries, who could vote against him on the Central Committee. He predicted a new plenum this week which might name several new Politburo members, including Moczar and Rakowski. He also thought it possible the Poles would make an early bid to join the IMF; the Soviets were no longer opposed now that Kosygin was gone. Western aid, he suggested, should be predicated on internal reform. (C)

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4. The OAS and Human Rights in Argentina: The Political-Juridical Committee of the OAS General Assembly continues to debate the core issue: Argentina's desire for a resolution that does not mention countries or assign responsibility for continued violations. We have tried to compromise by expressing a willingness to consider an omnibus resolution rather than separate country resolutions. They have been unwilling to accept our formula.

Held as firm as possible

We anticipate the Chairman of the Working Group (Mexico) will propose a compromise. We are working with the Mexicans and other friendly representatives to achieve language which preserves the authority of the IAHR. We will insist on a reference to the specific countries covered by the IAHR reports and appropriate mention of the violations that need to be corrected. (C)

5. Weizman Breaks With Ruling Coalition: As a result of Weizman's vote against the government on a no-confidence motion in the Knesset on November 19, the Herut Secretariat voted Sunday to expel him from the Party. Anticipating the action, Weizman had already said he intended to form a new party and called upon Moshe Dayan to head its election list. Dayan's reaction thus far reportedly has been cool. Unless Dayan warms to the idea, Weizman may be left without any important political personality willing to run with him.

Weizman apparently hopes his new party can win a sufficient number of seats to secure the Defense portfolio for himself in any new Cabinet which is expected to be headed by Shimon Peres and the Labor Alignment. He has come out in favor of full autonomy for the West Bank and Gaza and the strengthening of peace with Egypt. His defection from the ranks of nominal supporters of the Begin Government along with Dayan may make it more difficult for Begin to hold off calls for early elections. As for Weizman's future, while he remains a popular figure he has always been regarded as impetuous. His critics have held that his recent actions call his good judgment into question. Barring currently unforeseeable political turnabouts, Weizman's chances for returning to office look uncertain at best. (C)

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6. Earthquake in Southern Italy: A major earthquake registering 6.8 on the Richter scale struck southern Italy at 7:30 p.m. Sunday. There are reports of over 800 killed and the death toll may go much higher. Many U.S. citizen pensioners live in the earthquake zone, and we have a report that one elderly U.S. citizen was killed in Torre del Greco, a coastal town near Naples. Naples Navy authorities report no casualties to U.S. personnel or families.

The Italian Government rushed assistance to the zone. It has been deliberating to determine next steps and the nature of international assistance to be sought. Coordination for Italian relief assistance will be handled by experts who managed a 1976 earthquake.

The U.S. Embassy sent messages of condolence to Italian Government officials and advised them the United States is prepared to offer assistance. U.S. military commands have been alerted to possible need for materiel and manpower. (U)

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Evening Reports (state), 7/11/80