

March 5, 1971

**Letter, UNCURK Principal Secretary Kuzbari to UN
Chef de Cabinet Narasimhan**

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Summary:

The NDP accuses the incumbent administration for activity aimed at suppressing opposition candidates. Kuzbari mentions that it is unknown if the government will allow freely conducted elections.

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UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION FOR THE UNIFICATION AND REHABILITATION OF KOREA
(UNCURK)CONFIDENTIAL

Seoul, 5 March 1971

Dear Mr. Narasimhan,

Throughout this week an atmosphere of heated wrangles among various political parties existed in the Republic of Korea. In essence, these arguments are related to the rights of these parties to engage themselves in pre-election campaigning, contrary to the Election Law which stipulates that the election campaign should begin one month before the date of the presidential election. Both the Government's Democratic Republican Party and the opposition New Democratic Party have stated that they will revert to the Central Election Management Committee to have its legal interpretation on what they described as "unlawful" activities.

On its part, the New Democratic Party has intensified its pre-election campaign and challenged the Government on a number of issues linked with corruptions, suppression of the press and enlisting the support of the armed forces to President Park Chung Hee. Its presidential candidate, Mr. Kim Dae Jung, went as far as to state this week that, should he fail to be elected in the presidential election, he will nevertheless attempt to collect the necessary half a million signatures which are required to re-amend the present Constitution and, thus, to ban the re-election of any president for a third term. (The Constitution was amended in October 1969 to pave the way for the incumbent President to run for a third term.) He also called on the Government to stop enrolling college students for military training and again referred to the "bankruptcy" of the present regime's foreign policies. His remarks were viewed by political observers here as forcing the Government to spell out publicly its views on the above issues.

As to the ruling Democratic Republican Party, it is expected to hold its convention on 17 March and to nominate President Park officially as presidential candidate. It has

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Mr. C.V. Narasimhan
Chef de Cabinet
United Nations
New York

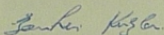
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already taken some steps to tighten its control on the party organizations in order to make sure that the results of the election will be in favour of the present administration.

At the moment, there are six presidential candidates running for the election, but the two most important ones are the incumbent President, Park Chung Hee, who is also the leader of the Government's Democratic Republican Party, and Mr. Kim Dae Jung of the opposition New Democratic Party. An early estimate of their strengths indicates that, while President Park may obtain enough votes to secure his re-election, the opposition candidate could pose a serious threat to him in the urban centers and major cities. The unknown factors in the present situation are whether the election could be conducted freely or that, sensing a possible defeat, the Government may attempt to interfere in it thus creating conditions with unforeseeable results.

With my warmest personal regards,

Yours sincerely,



Zouheir Kusbari
Principal Secretary