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Analysis on the Suggestion of the US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger for Holding 4-Party Talks

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Summary:

Park Tong-Jin and Philip Habib discuss the proposal for four-party talks involving North Korea, South Korea, the United States, and China.

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Analysis on the Suggestion of the U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger for Holding 4-Party Talks

(The Wording Expected to Be Insert in the Script of U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's Keynote Address at the 31st United Nations General Assembly)

1976. 9. 21

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

When Park Tong-Jin, Minister of Foreign Affairs met Philip Charles Habib, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs on September 17, Assistant Secretary P. Habib told that he was considering the proposal as below on the Korean issue in the keynote address to be delivered by Secretary of State Henry Kissinger at the United Nations General Assembly and asked our immediate response.

I. The proposal

a. In order to give more flexibility, the United States wanted to change the 4-party talks on Korea, proposed by Secretary of State Henry Kissinger on July 22, to the inter-Korean ones and have the United States and Communist China participate in the talks as observers.

b. In case that both Koreas made an agreement during the South-North Korea talks, those other parties concerned, such as the U.S.S.R., Japan, etc. would be asked to confirm the agreement, which would be asked by mutual consent between the United States and Communist China.

II. Purpose of the proposal

a. To emphasize the importance of the inter-Korean talks in the resolution of the Korean question

b. To gain more supporters of the ROK by showing its flexible attitude (The United States thinks that the North Korean puppets would certainly refuse this proposal; consequently, the United States assumes that the opposition of the North Korean puppets would relatively work to our advantage.)

c. To declare that the United States will not negotiate directly with the North Korean puppets and that ROK' participation in the talks is absolutely necessary, as an extension of Secretary Kissinger's proposal on the Korean question made on July 22

d. To formulating alternatives to the armistice agreement in an arrangement separate from resuming inter-Korean dialogue under the July 4th North-South Joint Statement.

III. Analysis on the proposal

Advantages

a. This proposal undergirds His Excellency's policies on peace and peaceful unification policy, especially His Excellency's basic stance on the independent and peaceful settlement of the Korean question. At the same time, it repudiates the demand of the

North Korean puppets for a peace treaty with the United States.

b. The proposal not only allows the ROK and the United States to show their sincere and flexible attitude in order to address the Korean question but also contrasts Korea's rightful and pragmatic claims with the unyielding and unrealistic ones of North Korean puppets, who actually want to avoid the settlement between those directly concerned. As a result, it serves to intensify our stance in the eyes of the international community and underline the fact that we, the ROK, are one of the parties directly concerned.

c. It is most likely to help us resolve the issues on a more unrestrained stand through backstage negotiation while the U.S. and China are attending the talks as observers. Moreover, the bilateral talks formally stop North Korea from participating in the 4-party talks on the same footing with the U.S.; accordingly, it undermines North Korea's propaganda that the U.S. always intervenes in the inter-Korean issues.

Disadvantages

a. Because the United States has frequently revised its proposals related to Korea with no particular changes under the same circumstances, its inconsistent changes may look as if the U.S. takes popular tactics to gain more votes.

b. It may boost Communist China's position excessively higher than that of the U.S.S.R. in handling the Korean question, considering the U.S.S.R.'s historical involvement in Korea.

c. It may possibly leave the impression of a prelude to the gradual reduction of American involvement in Korea, particularly in light of this year's presidential election.

IV. Suggestions:

The following directions to the Minister of Foreign Affairs need to be assented first, considering the moves of North Korean puppets to withdraw its proposal of resolution that it has submitted to the upcoming United Nations General Assembly:

1. You are required to report as soon as possible any relations between content of Secretary Kissinger's address script (regarding the bilateral talk) at the United Nations General Assembly, which you reported before, and North Korea's withdrawal of its resolution that she attempts.

2. Subsequent directions on how to reply to Secretary Kissinger will be given after considering your forthcoming report.