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SECRET SECURITY INFORMATION

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NO: DELGA 209, November 17, 10:30 p.m.

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By DEB NLI Date 7-24-81

Re Korea.

Meeting twenty-one sponsors held this morning to discuss developments and particularly Indian draft res.

Secy recalled that he and others had welcomed any suggestions consistent with fundamental principle non-forcible repatriation of PWs. Referring to various developments and suggestions, Secy stressed three essential points any proposal must meet:

- (1) Clear and categorical affirmation principle non-forcible repatriation:
- (2) Any commission or other machinery must be workable and designed to determine expeditiously attitudes of PWs;
- (3) PW problem must be disposed of in brief period following armistice with PWs having real choice of either going home or otherwise being released.

Stressing last point in particular, Secy pointed out that in truce sense there would not be forcible repatriation if only choice given to PWs were to go home or remain in indefinite captivity. If this were only choice given to PWs he noted, it would require use of force to transfer PWs to commission, which we could not agree to do. Secy also explained that disposition non-repatriates is not serious problem. Koreans, who constituted larger portion of PWs, could be assimilated in Korea; Chinese would be free to go anywhere, with UN offering them care as refugees until they were in fact resettled. Secy cited as example Palestine refugees in which UN was caring for much larger group.

If large numbers these Chinese wanted to go to Formosa he saw no reason why they should not. Armistice agreement provides that they would not again participate in Korean conflict. If there is risk they might be enrolled in Chinese Nationalist Armies, there is far greater risk that Commies will enroll in their armies the many more thousands PWs returning to them.

Referring

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Referring to tactics, Secy said that in general we have two alternatives--either to amend our own res, drawing into it useful suggestions from Indian or other proposals, or to amend Menon res to make it acceptable. He indicated preference for first course, since it would be easier to maintain and hold majority for our draft than for process of amending someone else's.

With exception of Canada, sponsors did not at this meeting dissent from Secy's analysis on essential substantive points. Canada, however, thought that it might be desirable to go along with Menon's final paragraph which would obscure disposition of non-repatriates and let time dispose of that problem. While no one else publicly supported Canada, staff believes, on basis private comments made previously, that this suggestion will probably find some support at least from France and UK.

Several other dels, notably French, following Selwyn Lloyd's lead, took line that except for final para Menon draft Indian res generally acceptable.

Denmark, however, also stressed importance of composition and workability of commission, and Norway reminded group that Sweden and Switzerland said they would not serve unless functions of commission clear and workable. Towards close of meeting Secy spoke again in reply to Canada, emphasizing that final para is heart of Menon proposal and India wld probably agree to change it. He stressed that this para entailed greatest possible danger and problem of disposition of PWs is not one which time will cure. Secy reiterated that if PWs have no future other than indefinite captivity, they will forcibly resist being sent to commission. He pointed out also that concept of indefinite retention is monstrosity creating impossible practical problems which commission of kind Menon contemplates could not possibly resolve or handle. Result will be that armistice will be worthless, for with continuing explosive PW sitn UNC will have to keep all its troops in battle position with ever present danger resumption hostilities over this quest. He stressed in strongest terms that prob is not to find words that obscure issue but to solve PW prob definitively on humanitarian basis.

On tactics majority of sponsors who referred to problem thought it would be better to make necessary amendments in Indian res than to amend and push through twenty-one power proposal. In addition to UK, France, and Canada, countries like Turkey took view that Indian res might have better chance of being acceptable to Communists and that it would be better to have Russians vote against an Indian res than against ours.

It was decided establish working group consisting of US, UK, France, Australia, Canada, Colombia, Denmark, and Turkey to consider resolution as finally introduced by India today, and explore possibility of amendments which might make it acceptable. (Canada was added at France's suggestion.)

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In general

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In general meeting disclosed strong desires most other dels to go to great lengths to meet Indian initiative, in hope that this might lead to armistice or at least to unanimous non-Communist support for GA action.

We intend in working group meeting tomorrow, Nov 18, to present as working paper revised Menon res set forth in GADEL 57 as revised at meeting with Johnson and Secy over weekend, with view to having working group report to sponsors on Nov 19.

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