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ONLY

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
NATIONAL FOREIGN ASSESSMENT CENTER

#1 20 May 1980

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SPOT COMMENTARY: South Korea

The number of people detained since the imposition of full martial law Sunday is much higher than the 26 acknowledged by the Martial Law Command. They include some politicians on charges of corruption, but the majority are nonpartisan dissidents or supporters of militant Kim Dae Jung. The Korean National Council of Churches estimates that at least 50 dissidents and 50 students have been detained and that the authorities are still searching for others. [redacted]

Latest reports on the situation in Kwangju indicate that crowds are gathering downtown but there have been no clashes today. [redacted]

The special session of the National Assembly scheduled to convene today has been postponed indefinitely. The Assembly building was sealed off by security forces; 45 opposition New Democratic Party assemblymen who were refused entry to the building submitted their resignations from the Assembly en masse. Other opposition party members met at party president Kim Young Sam's home, where security forces disrupted a press conference called in defiance of the martial law ban on political activities. Kim Young Sam is apparently confined to his house, but not under arrest. [redacted]

The Supreme Court announced its decision to uphold the death sentence of Kim Jae Kyu, self-confessed assassin of Park Chung Hee. Execution by hanging is expected within five days of confirmation by the government. The execution could add to discontent among students, many of whom consider Kim a hero. [redacted]

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**SUBJECT: South Korea**

North Korea, in its first major commentary on the current round of unrest in the South, today sharply criticized Seoul's decision last weekend to extend martial law nationwide. Pyongyang, however, disavowed any intention to interfere in the South. Seoul has used the threat of intervention from the North to help justify its crackdown on antigovernment activity, and Pyongyang obviously is seeking to avoid giving substance to Seoul's charges while demonstrating support for dissident elements.

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