

Ronald Reagan Presidential Library
Digital Library Collections

This is a PDF of a folder from our textual collections.

Collection: Sigur, Gaston J.: Files
Folder Title: Korea 1983 [12/09/1983 -
12/31/1983]
Box: RAC Box 10

To see more digitized collections visit:

<https://reaganlibrary.gov/archives/digital-library>

To see all Ronald Reagan Presidential Library inventories visit:

<https://reaganlibrary.gov/document-collection>

Contact a reference archivist at: reagan.library@nara.gov

Citation Guidelines: <https://reaganlibrary.gov/citing>

National Archives Catalogue: <https://catalog.archives.gov/>

WITHDRAWAL SHEET

Ronald Reagan Library

Collection Name SIGUR, GASTON: FILES

Withdrawer

RBW 9/21/2009

File Folder KOREA 1983 (12/09/1983-12/31/1983)

FOIA

F07-057/1

Box Number 10

WAMPLER

13

ID Doc Type	Document Description	No of Pages	Doc Date	Restrictions
76154 LETTER	CHUN DOO HWAN TO RR [IN ENGLISH]	1	11/18/1983	B1
76155 LETTER	CHUN DOO HWAN TO RR [ATTACHED TO DOC. 76154, IN KOREAN]	1	11/18/1983	B1
76157 NOTE	RE. KOREA	1	12/13/1983	B1 B3
76158 MEMO	FOR RECORD RE. SOUTH KOREA [ATTACHED TO DOC. 76157]	6	12/13/1983	B1 B3
76156 CABLE	PARIS 45942	2	12/8/1983	B1

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- B-1 National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- B-2 Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
- B-3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
- B-4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
- B-6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
- B-7 Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
- B-8 Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- B-9 Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

J. Kim

MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

December 9, 1983

ACTION

MEMORANDUM FOR ROBERT M. KIMMITT

FROM: GASTON J. SIGUR 

SUBJECT: Letters Re Free Press in South Korea

Attached at Tab A is a reply to Mr. Kee Bong Chang, for signature by a White House staff person.

RECOMMENDATION:

That you forward Tab I to Richard Darman.

Approve _____

Disapprove _____

Attachments:

Tab I White House Staffing Memo to Darman
Tab A Draft reply
Tab B Incoming correspondence

MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

MEMORANDUM FOR RICHARD G. DARMAN

FROM: ROBERT M. KIMMITT

SUBJECT: Letters Re Free Press in South Korea

Attached at Tab A is a draft reply to Mr. Kee Bong Chang. Although Mr. Chang wrote the President, State recommends that the reply be signed by a White House staff member. State also suggests the reply be delivered by the American Embassy in Seoul, rather than through the mails.

Attachments:

Tab A Draft reply
Tab B Incoming

3

SUGGESTED REPLY

Dear Mr. Chang:

I am replying to your letter to President Reagan regarding press freedom in Korea.

As I am sure you are aware by now, President Reagan used his visit to Korea to address the question of democratic development. He spoke on this subject on at least three occasions; two of these speeches were reprinted in the Seoul daily papers, and televised nationally. In deference to Korean sovereignty, the President did not seek to prescribe which specific steps Korea should take, nor in what order; however, the concept of a free press certainly is implicit in the democratic development which he unambiguously endorsed.

I assure you that the US Government remains strongly committed to political liberalization and democratic development, including the growth of a vigorous and assertive free press, in Korea and worldwide.

Sincerely,

Mr. ~~Kee~~ Bong Chang,

Former Publisher/President,

The Shin-A Ilbo,

1 Jung-dong, Seoul, Korea 100.

RECEIVED

7628

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

83 OCT 24 10:00

DATE: 10/24/83 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY:

SUBJECT: LETTERS RE FREE PRESS IN SOUTH KOREA

	ACTION FYI			ACTION FYI	
VICE PRESIDENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	HICKEY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MEESE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	JENKINS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BAKER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	McFARLANE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DEAVER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	McMANUS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
STOCKMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	MURPHY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DARMAN	<input type="checkbox"/> P	<input type="checkbox"/> SS	ROGERS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DUBERSTEIN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SPEAKES	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
FELDSTEIN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SVAHN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
FIELDING	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	VERSTANDIG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
FULLER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	WHITTLESEY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GERGEN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HERRINGTON	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

REMARKS:

An information copy of the attached has gone forward to the President. Please prepare an appropriate response.

Thank you.

RESPONSE:

Richard G. Darman
Assistant to the President
Ext. 2702

6
October 13, 1983

The Honorable Ronald Reagan
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. President:

I am writing in the hope that your forthcoming official visit will contribute to the interests of all parties concerned.

I am especially anxious that you would take special interest in the revival of freedom and speech in Korea. My life-long dedication to the press and an objective way of thinking have compelled me to write this letter.

It was May 6, 1965 that I had given birth to our newspaper, the Shin-A Ilbo. Since 1945 when I first joined journalism, I have devoted more than thirty years of my life to journalism as a reporter, an editor, a managing editor, a vice-president and finally as a president-publisher. Only those three years that followed the outbreak of the Korean War were a brief period of exception: I served as press secretary for the president. During even that brief period was not without contact with the press. My tenure as press secretary, my interaction with the press was on a frequent basis.

The Shin-A Ilbo which I had started with my colleagues was a relatively smallish newspaper enterprise organized by a group of journalists without outside help. Printing facilities were brought in from the Honolulu Advertiser and were set up on a new lot. It was an entity consisting of a group of same-minded journalists-determined to pursue an independent course. Thus started, it took nearly ten years for the paper to achieve its viability.

We have had many painful experiences: when we refused to compromise with the government we were exposed to suppressions. Yet we surmounted such difficulties with the conviction that there should come a day when freedom of press would prevail. When President Park Chung-hee died in October 1979, we thought the day of freedom of the press was at hand. That expectation, however, was completely shattered in October 1980. On the evening of October 12, 1980, I was invited to what they said would be a talk with the military security chief at his headquarters. There, I was escorted to an interrogation room. Owners of other newspapers, news agencies and broadcasting companies experienced the same treatment.

V

The Honorable Ronald Reagan
Page Two
October 13, 1983

In that room I was forced to close down The Shin-A Ilbo which was providing living to some 3,000 families across the nation. We were to discontinue our publication on November 25 and to surrender our printing facilities to the Kyunghyang Shinmoon-Moohwa Bangsong (government, operated newspaper-broadcasting corporation) at prices less than those recorded on the balance property. It was unilaterally dictated to us - it was made clear that if we refused to tolerate the scheme we should be faced with circumstances under which it would be impossible for us to operate a newspaper business. Indirect censorship was practiced by the government by failing to supply items essential in publishing a newspaper, i.e. newsprint, impediment of direct sales efforts for advertisement, refusal and not allowing adequate access for distribution by blocking usage of government operated rail systems.

Each of the aforementioned contributed to the failure of The Shin-A Ilbo during its 16th year of operation.

Unfortunately, since 1981, there has been an increase in the channels of indirect censorship of free and open publications in the following ways:

1. Abusive use of libel code;
2. Restriction of import of equipments and materials by the media through foreign exchange control;
3. Publication license system;
4. Increased reliance on the government-controlled advertisements;
5. Media operations by the government and pro-government personalities;
6. Government's intervention in foreign news;
7. Government's investments in and loans to the media;
8. Tax pressure against the media;
9. Intervention and dictation concerning the domestic news;
10. Priority treatment of government-oriented news and interference in news treatment;
11. Control of news concerning the opposition activities;
12. Intervention in employment management of media personnel;

The Honorable Ronald Reagan
Page Three
October 13, 1983

13. Interference with news circulation;
14. Compulsory training of journalists by the government organizations;
15. Restriction of reporting on provincial events;
16. Compulsory coverage of news and background materials which present government's position favorably;
17. Exercise of influence with the advertisers.

We have long fought for the cause of press freedom. There is no reason for us to tolerate the absence of this freedom as it exists under the communist regimes. Although things had been far from satisfactory up until October 1980, at least the state of affairs that prevailed in those days should be restored. As far as the press is concerned, this point should be made clear to the Korean leaders during your ~~welcome~~ forthcoming visit. Good friends should be candid about each other's shortcomings, not overlook them. And now is the time for that candid friendly, quiet advice. If such advice is given, those who stand for the cause of democracy and freedom will find special significance in the official visit of President Reagan. It is my strong conviction that only those countries that respect the course of democracy and freedom of press can sustain anti-communistic consensus among their people which has such a vital importance for national security especially for a country like Korea.

Wishing this letter may be assistive in your policy formation, my only purpose in coming here is to hope for your support in helping to address the obstacles imposed by government to freedom of speech and press in Korea.

Our newspaper, The Shin-A Ilbo, and myself personally, are familiar to successive American ambassadors: William Porter, Philip Habib, Richard Erikson, Jr., and Ambassador Schneider.

I assure you, my personal interest and motivations are most sincere.

Most respectfully,



KEE BONG CHANG
Former Publisher/President
The Shin-A Ilbo
1 Jung-dong, Seoul, Korea 100

Mr. Kee Bong Chang
c/o The Mayflower Hotel
1127 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20036
Attn: Ms. Ameliese Ervin, Consierge

October 17, 1983

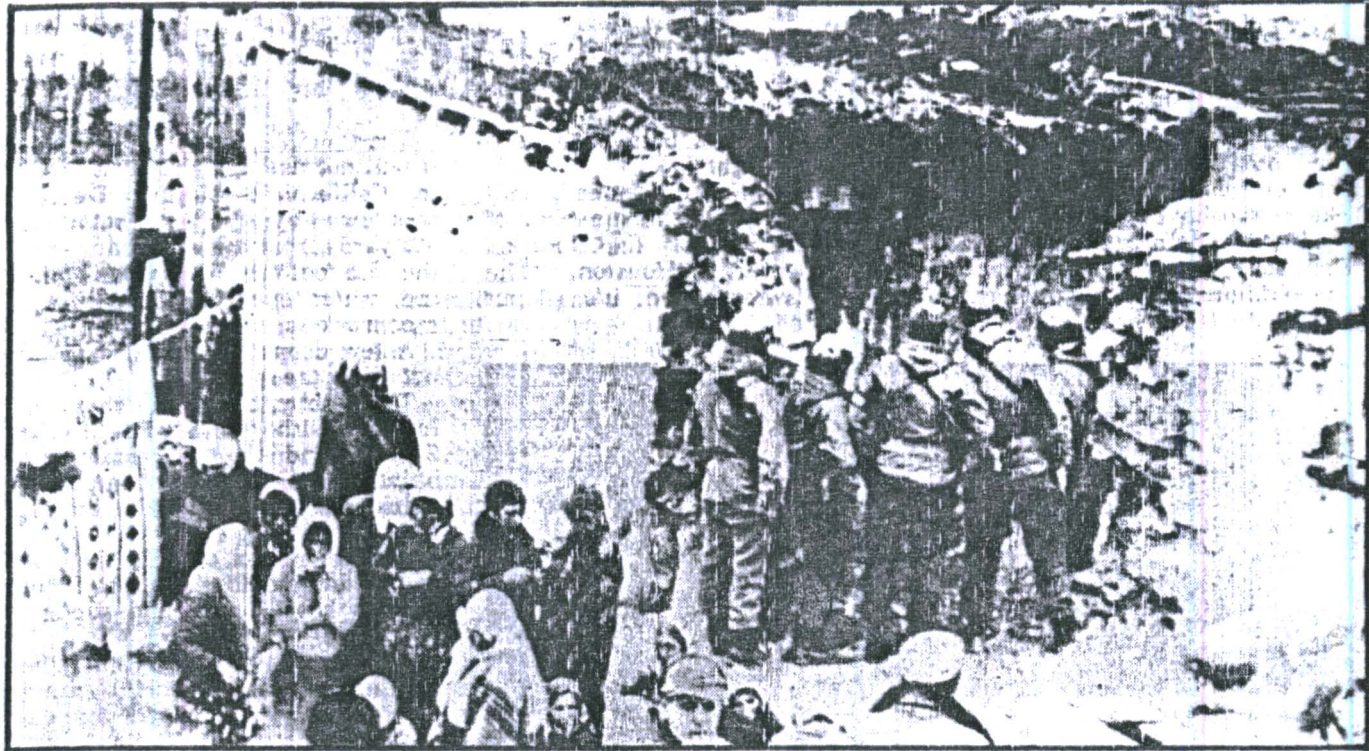
Dear Jim-

I am sending this in through you because the White House should be fully aware, in advance of the President's trip, of the extent of the Seoul government's oppressive moves against a free press in South Korea.

The signer of the attached letter is someone I have known for 30 years. He is one of several respectable publishers who lost his paper. He does not want to go public with this plea for fear of retribution (he still owns his paper mill).

One would hope that the President would find occasion to express the concern of many Americans over the lack of a free press in South Korea.

MATTHEW STONE
Marv-



Gas explosion kills 105

Mourning relatives gather outside the ruins of a house in a tiny village in Turkey where 105 women and children died Monday night when a searing gas explosion flashed through a young woman's

engagement party. Witnesses said a gas emergency lantern, lit during a power blackout, exploded like napalm, killing everyone except a 6-year-old boy who escaped through a window. (UPI)

Algerian mediators bring secret Iranian message

United Press International

Bearing a confidential message from Iran, a high-level Algerian delegation flew to Washington Tuesday to resume negotiations to free the 52 American hostages.

As the three-man delegation left Algiers, the speaker of Iran's Parliament told reporters that

Washington Tuesday was composed of the Algerian ambassadors to the United States and Iran and Algerian Central Bank Governor Mostefai Seghir.

Officials said the Algerians, acting at Iran's request, were bringing Iran's written response to the American reply to the four

In Washington, State Department spokesman John Trattner said the American side at the talks would be led by Deputy Secretary of State Warren Christopher, the official who carried the U.S. reply to Iran to Algiers on Nov. 10.

Trattner said the United States

UNCLASSIFIED
(Classification)

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT
TRANSMITTAL FORM

S/S 8336959

Date Dec. 12, 1983

Korea
SIGUR

10

For: Mr. Robert C. McFarlane
National Security Council
The White House

Reference:

To: President Reagan From: President Chun, Doo Hwan, Republic of Korea
Date: November 18, 1983 Subject: Successful visit

WH Referral Dated: Dec. 1, 1983 NSC ID# _____
(if any)

_____ The attached item was sent directly to the
Department of State.

Action Taken:

- _____ A draft reply is attached.
- _____ A draft reply will be forwarded.
- _____ A translation is attached.
- _____ An information copy of a direct reply is attached.
- X We believe no response is necessary for the reason cited below.
- _____ The Department of State has no objection to the proposed travel.
- _____ Other.

Remarks: This is a reply to a letter from President Reagan.

for Charles Hill
Charles Hill
Executive Secretary

UNCLASSIFIED
(Classification)

REFERRAL

DATE: 1 DEC 83

MEMORANDUM FOR: STATE SECRETARIAT

DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION:

TO: PRESIDENT

SOURCE: ~~HWAN~~ CHUN, DOO HWAN

DATE: 18 NOV 83

KEYWORDS: KOREA SOUTH

HS

SUBJ: HWAN THANK YOU TO PRES FOR SUCCESSFUL VISIT TO KOREA

REQUIRED ACTION: RECOMMENDATIONS / DRAFT REPLY

DUE DATE: 5 DEC 83

COMMENTS.


FOR ROBERT M. KIMMITT

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

*Received in 5/5-I
12/1 at 2:35 pm (2/2)*

WITHDRAWAL SHEET

Ronald Reagan Library

Collection Name

SIGUR, GASTON: FILES

Withdrawer

RB 9/21/2009
W

File Folder

KOREA 1983 (12/09/1983-12/31/1983)

FOIA

F07-057/1
WAMPLER

Box Number

10

13

<i>ID</i>	<i>Document Type</i> <i>Document Description</i>	<i>No of</i> <i>pages</i>	<i>Doc Date</i>	<i>Restric-</i> <i>tions</i>
76154	LETTER CHUN DOO HWAN TO RR [IN ENGLISH]	1	11/18/1983	B1

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- B-1 National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- B-2 Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
- B-3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
- B-4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
- B-6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
- B-7 Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
- B-8 Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- B-9 Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

WITHDRAWAL SHEET

Ronald Reagan Library

Collection Name

SIGUR, GASTON: FILES

Withdrawer

RB 9/21/2009
W

File Folder

KOREA 1983 (12/09/1983-12/31/1983)

FOIA

F07-057/1
WAMPLER

Box Number

10

13

<i>ID</i>	<i>Document Type</i>	<i>No of</i>	<i>Doc Date</i>	<i>Restric-</i>
	<i>Document Description</i>	<i>pages</i>		<i>tions</i>
76155	LETTER	1	11/18/1983	B1
	CHUN DOO HWAN TO RR [ATTACHED TO DOC. 76154, IN KOREAN]			

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- B-1 National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- B-2 Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
- B-3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
- B-4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
- B-6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
- B-7 Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
- B-8 Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- B-9 Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

WITHDRAWAL SHEET

Ronald Reagan Library

Collection Name

SIGUR, GASTON: FILES

Withdrawer

RB 9/21/2009

W

File Folder

KOREA 1983 (12/09/1983-12/31/1983)

FOIA

F07-057/1

WAMPLER

Box Number

10

13

<i>ID</i>	<i>Document Type</i>	<i>No of</i>	<i>Doc Date</i>	<i>Restric-</i>
	<i>Document Description</i>	<i>pages</i>		<i>tions</i>
76157	NOTE	1	12/13/1983	B1
	RE. KOREA			B3

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

B-1 National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]

B-2 Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]

B-3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]

B-4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]

B-6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]

B-7 Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]

B-8 Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]

B-9 Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

WITHDRAWAL SHEET

Ronald Reagan Library

Collection Name

SIGUR, GASTON: FILES

Withdrawer

RB 9/21/2009
W

File Folder

KOREA 1983 (12/09/1983-12/31/1983)

FOIA

F07-057/1
WAMPLER

Box Number

10

13

<i>ID</i>	<i>Document Type</i>	<i>No of</i>	<i>Doc Date</i>	<i>Restric-</i>
	<i>Document Description</i>	<i>pages</i>		<i>tions</i>
76158	MEMO	6	12/13/1983	B1
	FOR RECORD RE. SOUTH KOREA [ATTACHED TO DOC. 76157]			B3

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- B-1 National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- B-2 Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
- B-3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
- B-4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
- B-6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
- B-7 Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
- B-8 Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- B-9 Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

WITHDRAWAL SHEET

Ronald Reagan Library

Collection Name

SIGUR, GASTON: FILES

Withdrawer

RB 9/21/2009
W

File Folder

KOREA 1983 (12/09/1983-12/31/1983)

FOIA

F07-057/1
WAMPLER

Box Number

10

13

<i>ID</i>	<i>Document Type</i> <i>Document Description</i>	<i>No of</i> <i>pages</i>	<i>Doc Date</i>	<i>Restric-</i> <i>tions</i>
76156	CABLE PARIS 45942	2	12/8/1983	B1

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- B-1 National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- B-2 Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
- B-3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
- B-4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
- B-6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
- B-7 Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
- B-8 Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- B-9 Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

Korea 23

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

12/21/83

Mr. Dunlop:

State recommended we send this letter to you asking you to kindly forward it to Mr. Kee Bong Chang. A copy is enclosed for your files.

Thank you.

Gaston Sigur

Mailed to:
Mr. Dunlop
Political Officer
American Embassy
Seoul, Korea

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

December 21, 1983

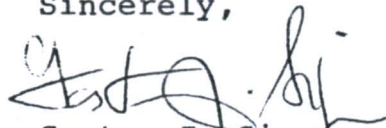
Dear Mr. Chang:

I am replying to your letter to President Reagan regarding press freedom in Korea.

As I am sure you are aware by now, President Reagan used his visit to Korea to address the question of democratic development. He spoke on this subject on at least three occasions; two of these speeches were reprinted in the Seoul daily papers, and televised nationally. In deference to Korean sovereignty, the President did not seek to prescribe which specific steps Korea should take, nor in what order; however, the concept of a free press certainly is implicit in the democratic development which he unambiguously endorsed.

I assure you that the United States Government remains strongly committed to political liberalization and democratic development, including the growth of a vigorous and assertive free press, in Korea and worldwide.

Sincerely,



Gaston J. Sigur
Special Assistant
to the President

Mr. Kee Bong Chang
Former Publisher/President
The Shin-A Ilbo
1 Jung-dong
Seoul, Korea 100

25

October 13, 1983

The Honorable Ronald Reagan
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. President:

I am writing in the hope that your forthcoming official visit will contribute to the interests of all parties concerned.

I am especially anxious that you would take special interest in the revival of freedom and speech in Korea. My life-long dedication to the press and an objective way of thinking have compelled me to write this letter.

It was May 6, 1965 that I had given birth to our newspaper, the Shin-A Ilbo. Since 1945 when I first joined journalism, I have devoted more than thirty years of my life to journalism as a reporter, an editor, a managing editor, a vice-president and finally as a president-publisher. Only those three years that followed the outbreak of the Korean War were a brief period of exception: I served as press secretary for the president. During even that brief period was not without contact with the press. My tenure as press secretary, my interaction with the press was on a frequent basis.

The Shin-A Ilbo which I had started with my colleagues was a relatively smallish newspaper enterprise organized by a group of journalists without outside help. Printing facilities were brought in from the Honolulu Advertiser and were set up on a new lot. It was an entity consisting of a group of same-minded journalists-determined to pursue an independent course. Thus started, it took nearly ten years for the paper to achieve its viability.

We have had many painful experiences: when we refused to compromise with the government we were exposed to suppressions. Yet we surmounted such difficulties with the conviction that there should come a day when freedom of press would prevail. When President Park Chung-hee died in October 1979, we thought the day of freedom of the press was at hand. That expectation, however, was completely shattered in October 1980. On the evening of October 12, 1980, I was invited to what they said would be a talk with the military security chief at his headquarters. There, I was escorted to an interrogation room. Owners of other newspapers, news agencies and broadcasting companies experienced the same treatment.

24

The Honorable Ronald Reagan
Page Two
October 13, 1983

In that room I was forced to close down The Shin-A Ilbo which was providing living to some 3,000 families across the nation. We were to discontinue our publication on November 25 and to surrender our printing facilities to the Kyunghyang Shinmoon-Moohwa Bangsong (government, operated newspaper-broadcasting corporation) at prices less than those recorded on the balance property. It was unilaterally dictated to us - it was made clear that if we refused to tolerate the scheme we should be faced with circumstances under which it would be impossible for us to operate a newspaper business. Indirect censorship was practiced by the government by failing to supply items essential in publishing a newspaper, i.e. newsprint, impediment of direct sales efforts for advertisement, refusal and not allowing adequate access for distribution by blocking usage of government operated rail systems.

Each of the aforementioned contributed to the failure of The Shin-A Ilbo during its 16th year of operation.

Unfortunately, since 1981, there has been an increase in the channels of indirect censorship of free and open publications in the following ways:

1. Abusive use of libel code;
2. Restriction of import of equipments and materials by the media through foreign exchange control;
3. Publication license system;
4. Increased reliance on the government-controlled advertisements;
5. Media operations by the government and pro-government personalities;
6. Government's intervention in foreign news;
7. Government's investments in and loans to the media;
8. Tax pressure against the media;
9. Intervention and dictation concerning the domestic news;
10. Priority treatment of government-oriented news and interference in news treatment;
11. Control of news concerning the opposition activities;
12. Intervention in employment management of media personnel;

27

The Honorable Ronald Reagan
Page Three
October 13, 1983

13. Interference with news circulation;
14. Compulsory training of journalists by the government organizations;
15. Restriction of reporting on provincial events;
16. Compulsory coverage of news and background materials which present government's position favorably;
17. Exercise of influence with the advertisers.

We have long fought for the cause of press freedom. There is no reason for us to tolerate the absence of this freedom as it exists under the communist regimes. Although things had been far from satisfactory up until October 1980, at least the state of affairs that prevailed in those days should be restored. As far as the press is concerned, this point should be made clear to the Korean leaders during your welcome forthcoming visit. Good friends should be candid about each other's shortcomings, not overlook them. And now is the time for that candid friendly, quiet advice. If such advice is given, those who stand for the cause of democracy and freedom will find special significance in the official visit of President Reagan. It is my strong conviction that only those countries that respect the course of democracy and freedom of press can sustain anti-communistic consensus among their people which has such a vital importance for national security especially for a country like Korea.

Wishing this letter may be assistive in your policy formation, my only purpose in coming here is to hope for your support in helping to address the obstacles imposed by government to freedom of speech and press in Korea.

Our newspaper, The Shin-A Ilbo, and myself personally, are familiar to successive American ambassadors: William Porter, Philip Habib, Richard Erikson, Jr., and Ambassador Schneider.

I assure you, my personal interest and motivations are most sincere.

Most respectfully,

Kee Bong Chang

KEE BONG CHANG
Former Publisher/President
The Shin-A Ilbo
1 Jung-dong, Seoul, Korea 100

Mr. Kee Bong Chang
c/o The Mayflower Hotel
1127 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20036
Attn: Ms. Anneliese Ervin, Consierge

October 17, 1983

Dear Jim -

I am sending this in through you because the White House should be fully aware, in advance of the President's trip, of the extent of the Seoul government's oppressive moves against a free press in South Korea.

The signer of the attached letter is someone I have known for 30 years. He is one of several respectable publishers who lost his paper. He does not want to go public with this plea for fear of retribution (he still owns his paper mill).

One would hope that the President would find occasion to express the concern of many Americans over the lack of a free press in South Korea.

MARVIN STONE
Marv-