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# United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 20, 1986

Co: DAVID  
 From: Liada K

Dear Mr. President,

We write to express our profound concern about the actions of the South Korean Government to suppress the recently initiated effort of the Council for the Promotion of Democracy to petition your government for a constitutional change in anticipation of the 1988 presidential election.

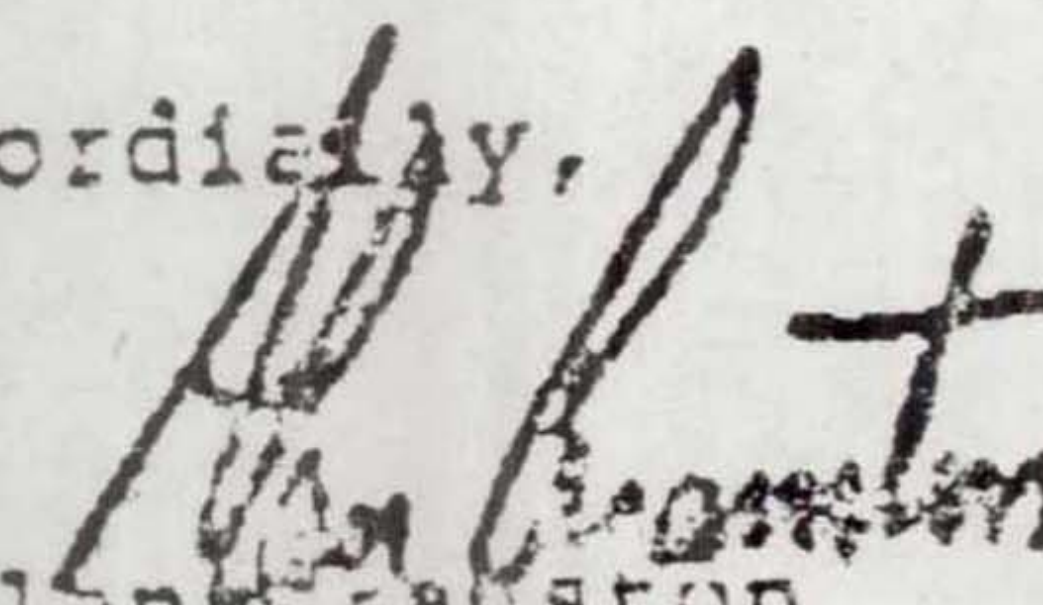
The announced and apparent goal of the Council's effort is to appeal, through a peaceful collection of signatures, for a change in the presidential election system from the use of an electoral college to a direct popular vote. Such a constitutional change, we understand, is already under discussion in the National Assembly; and reportedly many of the petition's initial signatories are members of the Assembly.

We recognize the special circumstances governing the security of South Korea and the importance of civil order and stability. However, given the stated intention of your government to move toward increasing democratization, we cannot recognize any acceptable rationale for the suppression of a peaceful expression of public opinion through petition. Indeed, the fact that this suppression has been accompanied by increased restraints on opposition leaders Kim Dae Jung and Kim Young Sam raises the most serious questions about the sincerity of your government's democratization pledge.

Because we attach great importance to the process of South Korea's democratization, we urge that you reconsider and reverse your present policy with regard to your public's right of petition.

Warmest regards,

Cordially,

  
 Alan Cranston

His Excellency  
 Chun Doo Hwan  
 President  
 Republic of Korea

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His Excellency  
Chun Doo Hwan

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