

Japan Links Seoul to Kidnaping

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TOKYO, Sept. 5—Exactly four weeks after the abduction of exiled opposition leader Kim Dae Jung from a Tokyo hotel, Japanese authorities named a South Korean diplomat today as a prime suspect in the kidnaping and declared "a Korean government agency" was involved.

Snowballing disclosures, official statements and related actions appeared to be propelling Japan and South Korea toward a showdown in the politically volatile case.

The Republic of Korea government refused an official Japanese demand that the suspected diplomat be made available for police questioning, and gave no indication that it is ready to free Kim from virtual house arrest in Seoul.

South Korean President Park Chung Hee was reportedly considering what to do next if he seeks to continue an uncompromising stand despite mounting evidence that officials and operatives of his government committed the kidnaping, a very strong Japanese reaction seems unavoidable.

Because of Kim case, Japan has already postponed a ministerial level meeting planned for this week to set the level for the next round of economic aid to South Korea. It was freely predicted that further and stronger actions will be taken if the dispute is not quickly eased.

The governments of the two countries, both allies of the United States, wish to avoid a damaging and perhaps dangerous rupture of their alliance. But questions of pride and honor, known in this part of the word as "face", are now at issue, making the problem increasingly serious.

Kim Daejung, the narrowly defeated challenger in the 1971 Korean presidential race, had been living in self-imposed exile in Japan and the United States since Park at

rested opposition politicians and seized total power Oct. 17. Four weeks ago today, on Aug. 8, Kim was bound, gagged and blindfolded in a Tokyo hotel and taken to Seoul where he was placed under police restraint.

In response to official inquiries from Japan, the South Korean government repeatedly denied that it had any prior knowledge of or connection with the abduction of its most outspoken and articulate critic. At the same time, it refused repeated Japanese requests that Kim be returned to Japan to aid in police investigation.

Today, Japanese police disclosed that fingerprints matching those of Kim Dong Woon, first secretary of the Korean embassy here, were found in the hotel room into which the opposition leader was shoved by his abductors. Police also disclosed that they have located two Japanese men who shared a brief elevator ride with Kim Dae Jung and his abductors on the way out of the Tokyo Hotel and that the two eyewitnesses had picked a photograph of the embassy first secretary as one of the men in the elevators.

Japan's top law enforcement officer, Director General Mikio Takahashi of the National Police Agency, declared that the evidence against the embassy first secretary would be sufficient to obtain an arrest warrant if he were a Japanese private citizen rather than a diplomat.

The Foreign Ministry summoned Korean Ambassador Lee Ho to request that first



KIM DAE JUNG
... under restraint

secretary Kim be made available to the police for questioning about the case. The request was immediately rejected on grounds of diplomatic immunity.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Susumu Nakaido, in a statement to reporters, said that involvement of a Korean government agency in the kidnaping is now undeniable on the basis of the evidence uncovered by the police. This was by far the strongest statement of South Korean government complicity yet made by a Japanese official.

There were suggestions among Korean emigre groups and some independent observers that the Japanese police may have much more information than they have disclosed.

Tonight the Yomiuri Shimbun reported that a hotel masseuse had identified diplomat Kim from photographs as the man who occupied the abduc-

tion room in Tokyo's Hotel Grand Palace the night before the kidnaping. The semi-governmental television network, NHK reported that police were investigating two other South Korean diplomats on suspicion of involvement in the kidnaping.

Little is known here about diplomat Kim Dong Woon, who is listed third from the top of the 12 first secretaries of the Korean embassy here. Though immigration records show that he has visited Japan periodically since 1953 and has been assigned here as a diplomat since 1968, Korean residents and veteran Korean correspondents here do not know him. Unlike most of his colleagues, his telephone number is not given in the diplomatic lists. There was widespread speculation, some of it attributed to police sources, that he is a member of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency.

According to immigration records, the diplomat left Japan for Korea on Aug. 10, two days after Kim Dae Jung's kidnaping, and returned on Aug. 17. Two days later he left for home again, and has not come back.

The next move in the jockeying between Japan and South Korea is not clear. Japan's opposition parties are demanding that aid to South Korea be cut off, and pressing the government to show results in the drive to return Kim Dae Jung to Japan.

If Kim is freed to continue his vocal opposition to the Park regime, he would be a far larger and probably more effective figure than he was before his abduction.