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## **I. United States**

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US Acting State Department Spokesman John Dinger ("REPORT ON STATE DEPARTMENT NOON BRIEFING, MAY 1," USIA Report, 5/1/97) announced that the US Department of Defense POW-MIA Office is planning talks with DPRK officials regarding the recovery of remains of US servicemen lost in the DPRK during the Korean War. The talks are tentatively planned to take place early this month in New York City.

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Seoul. Riot police used tear gas to stop members of the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions from marching in the city center, witnesses said. About 7,000 workers, joined by some students, attended ceremonies at a park where they denounced President Kim Young-sam's administration and demanded the arrest of Kim Hyun-chul, the president's second son, in connection with the widening Hanbo bribery scandal. The confederation, which has 500,000 members, spearheaded almost a month of work stoppages in January following the passage of a restrictive labor law that passed by a secret session of parliament in the absence of opposition members early in the morning of December 26. The strikes ultimately compelled the government to revise the bill.

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The Associated Press ("May Labor Day Marks Global Protests," 5/1/97) reported that individuals throughout the world marked the May Day labor holiday on Thursday, with street protests erupting in many places. In the ROK, the demonstrations in Seoul reportedly left dozens of workers injured, and at least 100 people were detained across the country. In the DPRK, the official Korea Central News Agency delivered its usual praise of revolution. "The workers of all countries have valiantly waged a fierce struggle to smash the bulwark of capital with the red flag firmly in their hands," it said. "If they uphold the flag, the workers and other people will win, and if they abandon it they will die." In the PRC, crowds filled Beijing's Tiananmen Square at dawn to honor model workers and watch soldiers raise the flag inaugurating a three-day vacation. However, an editorial in the Communist Party newspaper People's Daily warned of hard times in debt-ridden state industries and called for factory managers to be given greater responsibility -- a code for allowing them to make decisions based on profits, rather than on full employment. In Russia, a crowd comprised mostly of communists marched through central Moscow and gathered just off the Red Square to denounce the government and demand President Boris Yeltsin's resignation.

### **3. ROK Dismisses General in Spy Case**

The Associated Press ("SOUTH KOREA PUNISHES GENERAL," Seoul, 5/1/97) reported that Maj. Gen. Lee Poong-kil, in charge of arms procurement for the ROK Defense Ministry, was dismissed Thursday after being held responsible for failing to prevent the alleged leaks of classified military data to US defense contractor Donald Ratcliffe, who was arrested on Wednesday on espionage charges.

## **4. US-Ukraine Nuclear Cooperation**

Reuters ("U.S. PROVIDES MORE NUCLEAR FUNDS TO UKRAINE," Washington, 5/1/97) reported that US and Ukrainian defense officials on Thursday signed an agreement for Washington to provide an additional US\$47 million to help Ukraine destroy former Soviet strategic nuclear missiles. The deal would add to the US\$404 million the US has already given to Ukraine, which last year completed the removal of all nuclear warheads from its SS-19 and SS-24 long-range missiles. The funding will help Ukraine complete destruction of the SS-19s themselves and begin planning destruction of the more modern SS-24s. Defense Secretary William Cohen, at a news conference with Defense Minister Olexander Kuzmuk, praised Kiev's decision to become a non-nuclear state and said Washington would continue to help the former Soviet state modernize its military. Kuzmuk, an army general, said he had enjoyed visits earlier this week to US military bases. "We have had a chance to talk to average Americans, ... and I would like to tell you that the impressions that were formed during our 70 years of Soviet history, the impressions that we had of America, are gone with the wind right now." Asked if Ukraine continued to stand by its decision not to seek membership in NATO, Kuzmuk replied, "Ukraine has made a very clear statement that it is a neutral, non-bloc country and this is the political status of Ukraine right now. But to answer your question, I would like to give it a little bit of a philosophical bent: There is nothing permanent in the past, in the present and in the future." [Ed. note: On recent developments in Russian and PRC policies in response to pending NATO expansion, see "PRC-Russia Relations" in the US section and "RF Defense Minister's Visit to PRC" in the Russia section of the April 28 Daily Report.]

## **II. Republic of Korea**

### **1. ROK-DPRK Red Cross Talks**

Talks between the two Korean Red Crosses, set to start in Beijing Saturday for the first time in nearly five years, are likely to herald a thaw in the currently frozen ties between the two Koreas. Officials here said the DPRK would ask for the delivery of a specific amount of grain and the ROK delegates will respond positively to the request if the "effectiveness in transportation and transparency in distribution" are guaranteed by DPRK authorities. Convinced that securing aid through the four-party peace talks would be too time-consuming, the DPRK appears anxious to utilize the Red Cross channel for a substantial volume of grain aid from the ROK without any political commitment. Some officials here interpreted the DPRK's position as a "two-track" policy to get aid from the outside world. They also speculated that the DPRK's acceptance of Red Cross talks might be a peace gesture to the ROK's next administration before the December presidential election. However, Seoul is still suspicious of the DPRK's willingness to divert its large inventory of grain reserves for civilian rather than military consumption. Moreover, Pyongyang has poured one to two billion US dollars, possibly enough to solve the food problem, into large-scale works to glorify the late leader Kim Il-sung and de facto leader Kim Jong-il. (Korea Times, "S-N RED CROSS TALKS IN BEIJING EXPECTED TO CREATE MOMENTUM FOR RECONCILIATION," Son Key-young, 05/01/97)

### **2. US View of DPRK War Threat**

The threat that the DPRK would attack the ROK has not grown amid widespread famine, but the country remains a "potential tinderbox," US Defense Department spokesman Ken Bacon said Tuesday. "We don't see signs that any sort of military action is imminent in North Korea," Bacon said. The DPRK's 1.2 million-member army is well fed compared with the isolated communist nation's 23 million people, who now receive government rations equal to only 15 percent to 20 percent of an average person's caloric needs, Bacon said. Although many manage to forage to increase food intake to 80 percent to 90 percent, others are slowly dying, he added, citing reports of

widespread famine by news agencies and non-governmental organizations. He also said that these conditions have not led to apparent internal political instability. (Korea Times, "NK STILL CONSIDERED POTENTIAL TINDERBOX," 05/01/97) [Ed. note: Please also refer to items covering Bacon's comments in the previous two Daily Reports.]

### **III. People's Republic of China**

#### **1. PRC President's Visit to Russia**

The PRC's policy to develop strategic cooperative relations with Russia is not an expedient measure and will not be affected by any particular single incident, PRC President Jiang Zemin said when he met his Russian counterpart Boris Yeltsin in Moscow on April 23. Jiang said establishing and developing a strategic cooperative partnership between the PRC and Russia completely serves the fundamental interests of both countries and peoples, and conforms to the need to develop international relations in the post-Cold War era. It also has far-reaching implications for the safeguarding of each country's sovereignty, national dignity, just rights, interests, and the balance of world forces for a new peaceful order, Jiang said. During the meeting, Jiang expressed his appreciation for Russia's "one China" stand. Yeltsin pledged to continue to adhere to this policy. Jie Fang Daily ("JIANG ZEMIN HOLD TALKS WITH YELTSIN," Moscow, A1, 4/24/97)

On April 23, PRC President Jiang Zemin and Russian President Yeltsin signed a joint statement pledging to strive for the promotion of global multipolarization and the establishment of a new world order, China Daily ("JIANG, YELTSIN CHART RELATIONS," Moscow, A1, 4/24/97) reported. The statement said the two countries expressed their concern over attempts to enlarge and strengthen military blocs. The statement also called for the elimination of hegemonism and power politics in the world.

China Daily ("BORDER TREATY WELCOMED BY US," Washington, A1, 4/26/97) reported that the US welcomed a treaty signed by the PRC, Russia and three other Central Asian countries over the reduction of their troops along a 6,450-kilometer border, the US State Department said on April 24. The spokesman said the treaty leads to greater transparency in the military relationships among those countries and the US hopes it will lead to an improvement in the situation along that common border. The spokesman disagreed with press comments on a meeting between PRC President Jiang Zemin and Russian President Boris Yeltsin, described by some media as "some kind of face-off with the US." "That's not how we see it," he said.

#### **2. PRC-US Relations**

PRC Vice-Premier and Foreign Minister Qian Qichen said on April 28 that prospects for Sino-US relations are promising despite differences on a number of issue, China Daily ("PROSPECTS FOR US TIES GOOD," Washington, A1, 4/30/97) reported. Speaking at a joint news conference at the start of talks with US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, Qian, who arrived in Washington to prepare for state visits by PRC President Jiang Zemin and US President Bill Clinton, said that the PRC and the US share aspirations to resolve the questions as soon as possible. During the ensuing talks, the two ministers reviewed the progress of bilateral relations made this year and agreed to give developments a further shot in the arm. US State Secretary Albright said one of the priorities on the Clinton Administration's agenda is to keep and develop the relationship between the US and the PRC.

The PRC expressed strong displeasure on April 24 over a meeting between US President Bill Clinton and the Dalai Lama. Clinton joined a meeting between Vice-President Al Gore and the Dalai Lama on April 23 at the White House. Clinton told the Dalai Lama that he would urge the PRC to open direct

dialogue with him, wire service reports said. The PRC has always opposed meetings between foreign government leaders and the Dalai Lama. The PRC says the Dalai Lama is not a religious leader, but a political figure who is seeking "independence" for Tibet. PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Cui Tiankai said on April 24 that the PRC is firmly opposed to any acts to connive and support the Dalai Lama's activities of splitting the motherland. Cui said the PRC has conveyed this stand to the US. The door for negotiations between the central government and the Dalai Lama will continue to be open in the future if the Dalai Lama gives up his attempts to achieve "independence" for Tibet, Cui said. China Daily ("CHINA `UNHAPPY' WITH CLINTON-DALAI MEETING," A1, 4/25/97)

### **3. Diaoyu Islands**

The PRC believes that the Diaoyu Islands issue should be settled by negotiation on the basis of respecting facts when the time is ripe, PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Cui Tiankai said. His comments were in response to reports that a Japanese leader openly claimed that the Diaoyu Islands are Japan's and that it is not necessary for Japan to hold consultations with other countries on the issue, and a report that a member of Japan's Diet and a reporter from Japan's Sankei Shimbun recently stepped onto the Island. The PRC spokesman reiterated at the news briefing that the Diaoyu Islands have been an integral part of the PRC's territories since ancient times. He said the PRC demands that the Japanese Government take measures to prevent the repeat of any infringement upon the PRC's sovereignty and damage to Sino-Japanese relations. Wen Hui Daily ("DIAOYU ISLE AN INTEGRAL PART OF CHINA," Beijing, A4, 4/30/97)

### **4. US-Japan Relations**

People's Daily published a commentary ("A CONSPICUOUS VISIT," A6) on April 28 saying that Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto's visit to the US was noticeable. It said Hashimoto's visit signified that the revision of Japan-US defense guideline had entered its final stage. At present, the author said, at least two aspects of the new defense guideline cause great concerns: the range of Japan-US cooperative defense and the question of whether the new defense guidelines conform to Japan's current laws.

### **5. CWC Ratification**

The PRC has become the latest nation to ratify the UN treaty to ban the use, development and stockpiling of chemical weapons, Jie Fang Daily ("CHINA SUBMITS RATIFICATION OF CWC TO UN," United Nations, A4, 4/27/97) reported. On April 25, the PRC's Permanent Representative to the UN, Qin Huasun, presented the instrument of the PRC's ratification of the Chemical Weapon Convention (CWC) to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who is the depository of the CWC. The ratification of the CWC was made by PRC President Jiang Zemin on April 7. The president ratified it in accordance with a decision by the Twenty-third Session of the Standing Committee of the Eighth National People's Congress of China. By depositing the instrument of ratification, the PRC has become an original signatory country to the Convention. The PRC became the 78th country to ratify the treaty.

### **6. Cross-Taiwan Straits Talks**

A group of prominent scholars and researchers has proposed that the mainland and Taiwan start high-level political talks regarding the "one China" policy as soon as possible in order to break the current deadlock existing in cross-straits relations. Their recommendations evolved at a symposium organized by the Hong Kong-based newspaper Wen Wei Po on April 21 in Beijing. Wang Sheng, a researcher of the Institute of Taiwan Studies under the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, said that political negotiation is the only effective way to improve cross-straits relations, and that high

level Taiwanese authorities should respond quickly to the mainland's proposals for such talks. Wang suggested that the Taiwan authorities truthfully appraise the current situation as the first step toward creating an appropriate atmosphere for preparatory talks. The lack of progress and even the suspension of talks between the Beijing-based Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits and the Taipei-based Straits Exchange Foundation are a result of the political differences between the mainland and Taiwan and Taiwan authorities' lack of sincerity in making progress, Wang said. Xin Qi, a researcher of the Center for Peace and Development Studies, also said that it's necessary to hold mainland-Taiwan political talks on ending hostility in order to jointly shoulder the duties of safeguarding the PRC's territorial integrity and opposing independence for Taiwan. Xin believed that economic exchange and cooperation across the Taiwan Straits will surely have a positive impact on political talks. Xin said that at present, there is no atmosphere to resume cross-Straits talks. However, Xin urged that talks should be held first to discuss cross-Straits economic integration. China Daily ("CROSS-STRAITS TALKS SHOULD BE HELD UNDER 'ONE CHINA' POLICY," A4, 4/28/97)

The NAPSNet Daily Report aims to serve as a forum for dialogue and exchange among peace and security specialists. Conventions for readers and a list of acronyms and abbreviations are available to all recipients. For descriptions of the world wide web sites used to gather information for this report, or for more information on web sites with related information, see the collection of [other NAPSNet resources](#).

We invite you to reply to today's report, and we welcome commentary or papers for distribution to the network.

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