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CONTENTS

I. United States

1. DPRK Trade
2. US on DPRK Nuclear Plans
3. UN DPRK Meeting
4. ROK DPRK "Secret Funds" Investigation
5. PRC Space Flight Goal
6. US ROK Aircraft Carrier Destination
7. DPRK War Readiness
8. ROK-DPRK History
9. ROK-US DPRK Diplomacy
10. ROK-PRC-Russia Diplomacy
11. DPRK Underground Tunnels
12. Inter-Korean Tourism

I. United States

1. DPRK Trade

The Washington Post (Doug Struck, "NORTH KOREA'S CLOSED SOCIETY KEEPS TRADE ROUTES OPEN FLOW OF MONEY, GOODS FRUSTRATES US DRIVE TO TIGHTEN ISOLATION," Sakaiminato, Japan, 02/03/03) reported that the Bush administration's strategy to tighten that isolation and compel the DPRK to dismantle its nuclear weapons program may be undermined by the complexity and number of trade routes that snake in and out of the DPRK. The trade ranges from the global export of missiles to lone Korean smugglers who wade the river border into the PRC to barter for food. It includes products as legal and innocuous as snow crabs and as dangerous as smuggled drugs delivered to Japan's coastline by unmarked ships. The US has said it will not ask the U.N. Security Council for economic sanctions. But with no plausible military option, US officials have said they will likely want to tighten an economic and diplomatic noose around the government.

2. US on DPRK Nuclear Plans

The Washington Post (Walter Pincus, "NORTH KOREA'S NUCLEAR PLANS WERE NO SECRET, US STAYED QUIET AS IT BUILT SUPPORT ON IRAQ," 02/01/03) reported that in November 2001, when the Bush administration was absorbed in the aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks, intelligence analysts at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory completed a highly classified report and sent it to Washington. The report concluded that the DPRK had begun construction of a plant to enrich uranium that could be used in nuclear weapons, according to administration and congressional sources. The findings meant that the DPRK was secretly circumventing a 1994 agreement with the US in which it promised to freeze a nuclear weapons program. Although the report was hand-delivered to senior Bush administration officials, "no one focused on it because of 9/11," according to an official at Livermore, one of the nation's two nuclear weapons laboratories. An informed member of Congress offered the same conclusion. The findings of the Livermore report were confirmed in a June 2002 National Intelligence Estimate, a major assessment by the CIA and all other intelligence agencies. These reports are part of a complex and hidden trail of intelligence about the North Korean effort that has raised questions about why the Bush administration waited until early October 2002 to confront DPRK officials with the intelligence -- and to go public several weeks later -- when details had been accumulating for more than two years.

3. UN DPRK Meeting

The Associated Press (William J. Kole, "UN NUCLEAR AGENCY'S BOARD TO MEET FEB. 12 ON NORTH KOREA CRISIS," Vienna, Austria, 02/03/03) and BBC News ("UN NUCLEAR WATCHDOG TO DISCUSS KOREA," 02/03/03) reported that the United Nations nuclear watchdog agency has decided to meet on February 12 to consider asking the UN Security Council to act against the DPRK, the head of the agency has said. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) wants the UN to consider what to do about North Korea, which last month pulled out of a key anti-nuclear agreement. "I've exhausted all possibilities within my power to bring North Korea into compliance," said IAEA chief Mohamed ElBaradei. However, ElBaradei said he believed the Security Council would not necessarily opt for economic sanctions. "I believe probably the Security Council will start again by looking for a peaceful resolution of the issue," he stated.

4. ROK DPRK "Secret Funds" Investigation

The Associated Press (Paul Shin, "SOUTH KOREA ENDS PROBE OF PAYOFF TO NORTH," Seoul, 02/03/03) and BBC News ("SOUTH KOREA DROPS SUMMIT INVESTIGATION," 02/03/03) reported that ROK prosecutors have decided to scrap their investigation into payments made to the DPRK prior to its summit with the South in 2000. A spokesman for the prosecutors office said the investigation was being stopped in the "national interest". The move follows a plea from ROK President Kim Dae-Jung, who asked prosecutors to drop the case to allow the matter to be settled in parliament. The decision is likely to anger opposition politicians, who have accused Kim's government of being behind the money transfer, in order to gain from the summit politically. Kim, who has previously denied knowing about Hyundai's dealings with the DPRK, appeared to acknowledge them on Thursday when his spokeswoman said that the money was justified "if (it) was spent on promoting South-North economic co-operation." "The unique nature of South-North relations has forced me to make numerous tough decisions as the head of state," Park Sun-Sook quoted him as saying.

5. PRC Space Flight Goal

The Associated Press (Ted Anthony, "CHINA REAFFIRMS MANNED SPACE FLIGHT GOAL," Beijing, 02/03/03) reported that as the PRC laments the demise of the US craft and crew of "real heroes," it is looking beyond the disaster and intimating that its own dreams of the stars remain undaunted - including a first manned flight reportedly planned for later this year. "The key is to learn lessons from this - to do our own things better and smoothly fulfill the Chinese nation's dream of flying to space," said Tu Shou'e, a space technology expert at the China Science Academy, quoted Monday by the Communist Party newspaper People's Daily. Articles about the shuttle were peppered with musings about the PRC's own space program, increasingly a symbol of national pride characterized by the government as evidence that the PRChas become a world-class nation. "China hasn't made a ship that can be used repeatedly - ours is only for one-time use," he said. "This accident provides lessons and experiences for our research and manufacturing work." China's space program has been flush with optimism after two events that unfolded in quick succession last month - the successful trip of its fourth unmanned spacecraft, Shenzhou IV, and the announcement that Shenzhou V, to be launched later this year, will be manned.

6. US ROK Aircraft Carrier Destination

The Associated Press (Pauline Jelinek, "US MAY SEND CARRIER TO KOREAN PENINSULA," Washington, 02/03/03) reported that the US Pentagon is thinking about sending an aircraft carrier to the waters off the coast of the Korean peninsula as a show of force amid the developing nuclear crisis with the DPRK, defense officials said Monday. Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld also is considering adding more air force presence in the region as a message to the DPRK that while the Bush administration focuses on a possible war in Iraq it is still capable of blunting any DPRK attack, one official said on condition of anonymity. White House spokesman Ari Fleischer said President Bush still believes that the North Korean standoff can be resolved peacefully. "But that doesn't mean the US won't have contingencies and make certain those contingencies are viable," Fleischer told reporters.

7. DPRK War Readiness

The Associated Press (Jae-Suk Yoo, "NORTH KOREA: MILITARY READY FOR ATTACK," Seoul, 02/03/03) reported that the DPRK said Monday its military and people are fully prepared to counter what it called US plans to invade amid a nuclear crisis on the Korean Peninsula. US officials have said they have no intention of invading the DPRK. "Our military and people are in full combat readiness to cope with US imperialist warmongers' indiscriminate military and political moves under their strategy to dominate the Korean Peninsula," the DPRK's official Radio Pyongyang quoted a military official as saying.

8. ROK-DPRK History

The New York Times (Howard W. French, "CLOUDS SLOWLY LIFT IN SOUTH KOREA," Seoul, 02/03/03) reported that for the past half century, while the DPRK has glorified its late founder, Kim Il Sung, as a demigod, the ROK has portrayed him as a demon, a scoundrel and a fraud. Now, a few lines in newly approved high school textbooks credit Kim for the first time for his role in combating Japanese colonialism. The passages have fed a debate here about changing relations with the DPRK and the US and about the politicization of history during the cold war. What the new textbooks illustrate most clearly, ROK intellectuals say, is how the strategy the sunshine policy begun by the departing president, Kim Dae Jung, has transformed the ROK - even more than its target, the DPRK - in important and often unexpected ways. The revised history textbooks reflect a broad overturning of

taboos here recently that has resulted in everything from ROK tourists traveling to the DPRK, to the president-elect, Roh Moo Hyun, openly questioning the nature of the longstanding alliance with the US. "The North-South confrontation had always been the major factor in constraining free debate and free thinking in South Korea," said Paik Nak Chung, an English professor at Seoul National University.

9. ROK-US DPRK Diplomacy

The New York Times (Don Kirk, "SOUTH KOREAN ENVOY PLANS TO DISCUSS CRISIS WITH US," Seoul, 02/03/03) reported a special envoy representing the ROK's incoming president plans to go to Washington next week to discuss the DPRK nuclear activities amid disclosures of possible fresh preparations by the DPRK to build nuclear warheads, officials said here today. Chyung Dai Chul, who is advising President-elect Roh Moo Hyun on efforts to bring about an end to the crisis, will confer with US Secretary of State Colin L. Powell and Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld, and hopes to meet President Bush in an effort to coordinate policy on DPRK, an aide said. Roh has advocated moderation, urging negotiations between the US and the DPRK and indicating his opposition to US efforts to bring the issue before the United Nations Security Council. During his visit to Washington, Chyung is expected to continue to argue for dialogue.

10. ROK-PRC-Russia Diplomacy

The Associated Press ("SOUTH KOREAN PRESIDENT-ELECT TO SEND ENVOYS TO RUSSIA, CHINA," Seoul, 02/03/03) reported that ROK President-elect Roh Moo-hyun plans to send envoys to Russia and the PRC this month for talks on the DPRK's nuclear development and other issues, his office said Monday. Roh aide Soon-hyung Chough will go to Russia, and Lee Hai-chan will go to the PRC, said Lee Nak-yon, Roh's spokesman. The envoys will discuss the DPRK's nuclear issue, bilateral relations and cooperation in Northeast Asia, Lee said. Details of the visit, including whom the delegation will meet, have not yet been finalized, he said.

11. DPRK Underground Tunnels

Reuters (Jane Macartney, "TUNNELS OFFER NORTH KOREA EASY INVASION ROUTE TO SOUTH," Paju, South Korea, 02/03/03) reported that deep underground where the DPRK and ROK, only the drip of water off the tunnel wall and the whir of a closed-circuit television camera disturb the eerie calm at the Cold War's last frontier. The camera is watching for invaders. The threat preoccupying the ROK is that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il could send his troops storming down the tunnel in the event of an outbreak of hostilities. That's why 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, ROK soldiers monitor the camera trained on a locked metal door in the thick concrete wall the ROK military built to block off the tunnel after they discovered it in 1978. "We have special tunnel search teams who are endeavoring all the time to detect more," said a young soldier, explaining the army's defensive measures. "We are always ready," said one ROK lieutenant deployed to guard the tunnel that reaches more than 400 yards on the ROK side of the demarcation line. The tunnel -- found after a tip-off from a DPRK defector who had worked as a compressor operator on the underground invasion routes -- was the third to come to light. The first was found in 1974, a second the following year as far as half a mile south of the demarcation line. A fourth -- much further to the east and less of a threat to the capital, Seoul -- was unearthed in 1990. All were found within the 2.5-mile demilitarized zone between the ROK and DPRK. They were clearly intended to move large numbers of troops in a surprise attack behind the ROK's front line, officers said. An estimated 10,000 lightly armed troops an hour could move down the 6.4 feet high tunnel at Paju. The second tunnel is wider and would

allow the entry of 30,000 troops per hour and could also accommodate heavy weapons such as tanks and armored personnel carriers. ROK officers say they believe as many as 20 more tunnels remain undiscovered.

12. Inter-Korean Tourism

CNN News ("SOUTH KOREA TO TEST TOURIST ROUTE TO NORTH," Seoul, 02/03/03) reported that the ROK's Hyundai Group has said it will test a route proposed by the DPRK to send tourists directly across the world's most militarized frontier to a scenic resort in the DPRK. Hyundai Asan Corp. said it planned to send 100 officials by road to Mount Kumgang on Wednesday, despite a deepening crisis over the DPRK's nuclear ambitions. The Hyundai Group has since late 1998 operated money-losing ferry boat tours to Mount Kumgang, the only place in the DPRK open to ROK citizens. The overland route to Kumgang along the eastern coast through the Demilitarized Zone is seen as a way to cut costs and reverse a steady decline in ROK tourists visiting the fabled mountain. The two Koreas finished clearing mines across two corridors in the DMZ in December to allow the reopening of road and railway links for the first time since the Korean War.

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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