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for the first time, leading to hopes that more possible burial sites of US soldiers will be identified. Some 8,100 US soldiers remain unaccounted for from the Korean War, in which more than 50,000 US soldiers died. So far, 209 sets of remains have been returned to the US, but only seven have been positively identified.

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4. ROK Food Aid to DPRK

The AP-Dow Jones News Service ("S.KOREA RED CROSS FOOD AID SUPPLIES TO N.KOREA LEAVE NEXT WK," Seoul, 8/4/97) reported that the ROK Red Cross Society said Monday it will send 6,000 metric tons of corn, 2,000 tons of flour, 4 tons of powered milk, and 270,000 liters of cooking oil to the DPRK next week. The shipments, promised under an agreement reached in Beijing last month by the two Korean Red Cross Societies, are to be made by ship as well as by rail via the PRC. The Beijing deal calls for the ROK to provide 50,000 tons of food aid to the DPRK; the ROK already has sent 50,000 tons of grain under an agreement signed in May.

5. DPRK-ROK Telephone Link Established

Reuters ("NORTH, SOUTH KOREA OPEN FIRST PUBLIC PHONE LINES," Seoul, 8/4/97) reported that the DPRK and the ROK on Monday linked up their public telephone lines for the first time since the Korean peninsula was divided at the end of World War II. The lines will allow ROK workers preparing to build the two light-water nuclear power plants in the DPRK to communicate with their families and their headquarters in the ROK. [Ed. note: See also "DPRK Nuclear Plants Construction Progress" in the US section of the July 24 Daily Report.]

6. DPRK Drought

Reuters ("DROUGHT-HIT N.KOREA REPORTS 100 MM RAINFALL," Tokyo, 8/3/97) reported that the DPRK's official Korean Central Broadcasting, in a broadcast Sunday monitored by Japan-based Radiopress, reported that drought-stricken North and South Pyongan provinces and North Hwanghae province in the DPRK received more than 100 mm (4 inches) of rain the previous night. The report said that other areas, including the region surrounding the capital Pyongyang, also received rain. The DPRK has previously reported that a heat wave currently afflicting the country is the worst in 61 years, and that the subsequent drought is causing serious damage to crops that are being counted on to relieve the country's famine conditions.

7. Taiwan-PRC Relations

The Associated Press ("TOP CHINA OFFICIAL MAY VISIT TAIWAN," Taipei, 8/2/97) reported that, according to the Economic Daily News, the PRC will send Liu Gangqi, deputy secretary general of the Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Strait, to Taiwan on Monday for a weeklong visit.

Liu will be the highest-level member from the semi-official body to visit the island since Beijing froze negotiations two years ago, signifying a potential thaw. The association handles the PRC's contacts with Taiwan over trade and other practical matters in the absence of official relations.

8. US Warship Visit to Hong Kong

Reuters ("US WARSHIP ON FIRST VISIT TO NEW HONG KONG," Hong Kong, 8/4/97) reported that on Monday the USS Blue Ridge, the flagship of the US Seventh Fleet, arrived in Hong Kong to become the first foreign warship to visit the city since the PRC resumed sovereignty over it July 1. The Blue Ridge took up a high-profile berth at Ocean Terminal, normally used by cruise liners. Seventh Fleet commander Vice-Admiral Bob Natter said Seventh Fleet commanders planned to meet the PRC's garrison chief in Hong Kong, Major-General Liu Zhenwu. "We have scheduled an official call tomorrow to visit the PLA garrison commander. We anticipate entertaining them to lunch on board tomorrow as well. We look forward to that very much," Natter said in an interview on board the ship. Natter also said that Hong Kong's reunification with the PRC would not interrupt the 60 to 70 port calls per year made by US Navy ships for recreation and supplies. The ship visits reportedly bring US\$50 million a year into the local economy.

II. Analysis

1. Four-Party Peace Talks Preliminary Meeting

The following analysis of the four-party peace talks preliminary meeting, set to begin on Tuesday at Columbia University in New York, was distributed by the Pacific Forum CSIS as "PacNet #31" on August 1, 1997. The author, Ralph A. Cossa, is executive director of the Pacific Forum CSIS, a Honolulu-based foreign policy research institute affiliated with the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, DC. The claims and opinions expressed below are those of the author, and have not been edited for this NAPSNet redistribution.

"The Four-Party Talks: Anticipating Pyongyang's Demands," by Ralph A. Cossa

On August 5th, South and North Korea are to sit down at Columbia University in New York with the U.S. and China for preparatory talks aimed at determining the earliest agreeable date and agenda for their long-awaited official Four-Party Talks. The talks were first proposed by South Korean President Kim Young-Sam and U.S. President Bill Clinton during their April 1996 summit meeting. A considerable amount of energy has been expended since that date just trying to get the North to agree to show up. Now comes the really hard part.

Washington and Seoul have laid out some specific objectives for the talks. Their express purpose is "to initiate a process aimed at achieving a permanent peace agreement." In addition to discussions on the procedural and legal steps required to replace the current armistice with a formal peace treaty, U.S. and South Korean officials have proposed that the agenda include Korean Peninsula confidence-building measures as well.

For their part, the North Koreans have also asked for an "Other" category to be included in the agenda. This is widely viewed as the means through which they will renew their quest for additional food aid, something South Korean and U.S. officials are reportedly willing to discuss (even though they rejected additional food aid as a precondition to holding the talks).

But we must be prepared for other North Korean demands as well. At a minimum, Pyongyang can be expected to call for a lifting of economic sanctions and the establishment of formal diplomatic relations with Washington. The Clinton Administration has already modified some U.S. economic

restrictions in place against North Korea and has expressed its willingness to exchange official liaison offices (one step below full recognition) this exchange which has been delayed by North Korea, is under the terms of the 1994 Agreed Framework between the U.S. and DPRK--in which North Korea agreed to freeze its suspected nuclear weapons program and dismantle its current nuclear research reactor in return for two light water reactors fueled by nuclear material is less susceptible to diversion for weapons purposes. North Korea has been reluctant to move further in these two areas, pending significant progress on other issues, to include a resumption of North-South dialogue. A further measured lifting of economic sanctions does seem negotiable, perhaps in return for the implementation of significant North- South confidence building measures. The establishment of formal diplomatic relations between Washington and Pyongyang (or, for that matter, between Tokyo and Pyongyang) is also a reasonable demand but should not precede cross-recognition between Seoul and Pyongyang or the signing of the Peace Treaty itself.

The U.S. and South Korea should also anticipate, and be prepared jointly and forcibly to dismiss North Korean demands for the removal or dramatic reduction of U.S. military forces from the Peninsula. This has been a long-standing DPRK wish and is likely to be seconded by the PRC. But, it is essential to remember that the absence of a peace treaty since 1953 has not meant renewed war, largely because of the deterrence provided by the stationing of U.S. military forces in the South. Nor will the presence of a treaty automatically guarantee peace, especially if this deterrence is removed. Until North Korea starts demilitarizing its 1.1 million man army--the fourth largest military in the world--and begins pulling it back from locations in close proximity to the DMZ, any reduction in the U.S. presence would be foolhardy, if not fatal.

The first time that discussions about the complete withdrawal of U.S. troops from the Peninsula become appropriate is upon peaceful reunification of South and North under one government. (In my view, a case can be made for some manner of continued U.S. presence even after reunification, but this is clearly a subject for further debate.) As the talks begin in earnest, both Washington and Seoul must be clear not only about what they seek but also about what they are willing--and specifically not willing--to give up. In this regard, it is important to put the original Four-Party Talks proposal in its proper context. It followed in the wake of North Korean threats to unilaterally abandon the existing Armistice. Instead, Pyongyang was demanding direct bilateral peace talks with the United States. In one important respect, the Four-Party Talks proposal accomplished its primary (unstated) purpose the day it was issued, by refusing to accept Pyongyang's unilateral declaration regarding the Armistice and by flatly ruling out any hope of a separate peace agreement solely with the United States.

The North must not confuse U.S. and ROK over-eagerness to get them to the table with a willingness to "pay any price" to achieve a peace treaty. Peace is better sustained by maintaining the current armistice than by reaching an agreement that puts our current deterrence posture at risk. The continued presence of U.S. troops in South Korea is for Washington and Seoul alone to decide; it should be seen as non-negotiable within the context of the Four-Party Talks.

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

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