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I. United States

1. US-DPRK Talks

Agence France Presse ("S. KOREA, US CONSIDER NO-FIRST-STRIKE PLEDGE TO N.KOREA," Seoul, 11/04/99) reported that ROK Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs Jang Jai-ryong said on Thursday that the US and ROK are holding talks on how to reassure the DPRK that the US will not launch a surprise attack against it. However, Jang stated, "This assurance cannot be in the form of any treaty. Instead, it might be some sort of declaration by the United States." The ROK's Yonhap News Agency reported that the US, the ROK, and Japan would hold a three-way meeting on November 8 in Washington to coordinate their strategies for negotiating with the DPRK in talks in Berlin from November 15 between US special envoy on Korean affairs Charles Kartman and DPRK Vice Foreign Minister Kim Gye-Gwan. Jang will lead the ROK delegation and focus on the easing of the US trade embargo against the DPRK. The Korea Herald quoted an anonymous senior US diplomat as saying that the US may give the DPRK such a pledge during the talks. The diplomat said that the DPRK seemed disinterested, "but the United States remains prepared to move on, on the reciprocal basis with the opening of the liaison offices."

2. Light-Water Reactor Construction

Pacific Stars and Stripes (Jim Lea, "CONSTRUCTION ON REACTORS FOR NORTH KOREA MAY START SOON," 11/05/99, 7) reported that a spokesman for the Korean Unification Ministry announced on November 3 that the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) and the ROK government have agreed to sign a contract later this month to start the construction of two light-water nuclear reactors in the DPRK. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for November 4.]

3. Korean War Massacres

The Associated Press (Sang Hun-choe, "EX-GI MEETS NO GUN RI SURVIVORS," Seoul, 11/04/99) reported that former Lieutenant Edward L. Daily of Clarksville, Tennessee traveled to the ROK to talk to survivors about the tragedy at No Gun Ri village in July 1950. The meeting between Daily and the survivors was paid for by NBC television and held near the killing site at a hotel in Taejon, 93 miles south of Seoul.

Pacific Stars and Stripes (Jim Lea, "148,000 S. KOREANS WERE MASSACRED BY U.S. TROOPS," Oslo, 11/05/99) reported that the DPRK's state-operated Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) on November 3 said that US troops massacred more than 148,000 ROK civilians at 23 locations during the Korean War. KCNA reported that the radio station Voice of National Salvation has compiled statistics showing the massacres occurred in Seoul, No Gun Ri, Taejon, Pusan and elsewhere during the early days of the war. Among atrocities listed in the report were 10,000 people killed in Seoul; 30,000 in Chunchon, 50 miles northeast of the capital; and 72,390 people in various parts of the country who were executed for providing aid and comfort to DPRK troops. The report said, "The shuddering massacre perpetrated by the U.S. troops ... is a heinous crime unprecedented in history, and the nation should force the murderers to pay for the blood shed by Koreans." The DPRK claims that the Voice of National Salvation is a clandestine station based in Seoul. ROK authorities say the station is located north of the Demilitarized Zone. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for November 4.]

4. Taiwan's Political Status

Agence France Presse ("LEE URGES BEIJING-WORLD COMMUNITY TO ACCEPT TAIWAN INDEPENDENCE," New York, 11/04/99) reported that Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui wrote in the November- December issue of the US magazine Foreign Affairs that full democracy in Taiwan has created the "emergence of a new sense of national identity impelled by the force of the ballot box." Lee also added, "I now refer to my fellow citizens as 'New Taiwanese', meaning those who are willing to fight for the prosperity and survival of their country, regardless of when they or their forebears arrived on Taiwan and regardless of their provincial heritage or native language." Lee noted that this new sense of identity was permeating every aspect of Taiwan's social and political life, "including the role that the voters of Taiwan feel is appropriate for their democracy in the world." He stated, "contrary to some inaccurate observations voiced overseas, it is not any of Taipei's actions, but rather Beijing's clumsy attempts at intimidation by belligerent rhetoric and provocative saber-rattling that have intensified the call in Taiwan for declaring independence." He said it was in "the best interest of regional and even global peace and stability for Beijing to embrace democracy rather than try to contain it." He urged the world community to update "its perceptions of what has taken place in Taiwan and the implications of democratic development for the region and the world and (to work) to accord Taiwan the international status and role it deserves."

Agence France Presse ("CHINA ATTACKS TAIWAN LEADER'S CLAIMS OF NEW NATIONAL IDENTITY," Bejing, 11/04/99) reported that the PRC's official Xinhua news agency on Thursday attacked Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui's comments on Taiwan's national identity. The agency said, "Lee's splittist attempt threatens the existence and development of Taiwan and the interests of Taiwan compatriots. Lee Teng-hui is determined to continue this political line, regardless of the interests of Taiwan compatriots." The commentary noted that Lee's remarks came at a time when Taiwan was still plagued by the aftermath of a devastating earthquake. It said, "It is Lee who has distanced himself from the international community by stubbornly challenging the one China principle. In fact, the international community opposes Lee's 'two nations' statement." The agency added that the world has applauded the PRC government's goal of "peaceful reunification" with all territories it considers a part of China under the "one country, two systems" policy.

5. US-PRC Military Relations

Washington Post (John Pomfret, "U.S. AND CHINA NEAR AGREEMENT ON MILITARY TIES," Beijing, 11/04/99, A25) reported that deputy chief of staff of the People's Liberation Army Lieutenant General Xiong Guangkai could travel to the US as early as December for the third in a series of annual consultations started by the US Defense Department and the PRC Defense Ministry. Two sources stressed that Xiong's trip is still in the planning stages and still needed to be formally approved by the Standing Committee of the Communist Party. One source said that Xiong's trip might be delayed until January. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for November 4.]

6. PRC Views of Russian Missile Test

The Associated Press, ("CHINA: U.S., RUSSIA START ARMS RACE," Beijing, 11/04/99) reported that PRC Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Zhang Qiyue said that Russia's testing of a new missile "is a direct consequence of the US attempt to revise the ABM (Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty) and develop NMD (National Missile Defense)." Zhang said that such US actions would undermine "the strategic balance and stability and spark a new round of an arms race." She also said that the PRC could not confirm Russia's November 2 test.

7. Russian Missile Test

Reuters (Martin Nesirky, "RUSSIA TEST-FIRES SECOND MISSILE IN THREE DAYS," Moscow, 11/04/99) reported that a Russian Defense Ministry spokesman confirmed Russian media reports on that Russia conducted a test- firing on Thursday of its SS-21 missile at the main range at Kapustin Yar in southern Russia. The spokesman stated, "Such tests are carried out to determine whether it is possible to extend their service life." The Russian Defense Ministry quoted Strategic Rocket Forces chief Vladimir Yakovlev as saying that the SS- 21 test had been successful, meaning its shelf-life would be extended to 22 years. Yakovlev told RIA news agency that if the US violated the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) treaty, Russia would be "freed from all obligations and the situation could become unpredictable." Tactical missiles such as the SS-21 are designed for army battlefield use rather than shooting down other missiles, and they are more regularly tested than anti-missile weapons. Yevgeny Volk of the US based Heritage Foundation said that the test "is a demonstration of force in view of likelihood of the Americans' pulling out of the ABM treaty. Russia wants to look stronger and to look resolute in challenging the United States' intention to build up an ABM system. But it is flag-waving rather than anything else as it is not a new missile." However, a Strategic Rocket Forces official said that the timing of the test "was simply a coincidence."

Reuters ("U.S. CALLS RUSSIAN MISSILE TEST 'IRONIC'," Washington, 11/03/99) reported that an unnamed senior US State Department official expressed concern over Russia's latest missile test. The official stated, "we find it distressing that Russia is raising the specter of an arms competition when what we're trying to do is work cooperatively with them to focus on rogue states. It's ironic that on the one hand the Russians would be complaining about our desire to move forward into a possible limited deployment and yet they're testing their own ABM system." He added, "We're not proposing to gut the treaty. We're proposing modest amendments to deal with threats that didn't exist at the time it was signed."

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