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I. United States

1. US-DPRK Relations: Food Aid, Briefing

DPRK Ambassador to United Nations Kim Hyong-u, in an interview with CNN world affairs correspondent Ralph Begleiter (WorldView, "NORTH KOREAN TALKS ABOUT HIS COUNTRY'S FOOD CRISIS," 2/4/97), replied to a question concerning the DPRK's postponement of attendance of the scheduled US/ROK briefing on the four-party peace talks proposal. Kim said: "On our side, the delegation to participate in the briefing has been composed. But what we have agreed upon is that we shall be participating in the briefing on the understanding that, on condition that both sides undertake simultaneous actions. However, the United States has not moved in the direction of providing us with food which it has promised in previous meetings with the United States and my country have had. Therefore, the problem, the matter of when the participation from our sides in the briefing will take place depends solely on whether the United States has implementing its promise that it has made to us or not. I think that reason behind the non-implementation of the promise on the part of the United States is because that the United States has been affected by the ill-minded forces that do not want the improvement of the relations between my country and the United States." Kim also said that claims that the DPRK is diverting resources from its people to support a massive military "are totally incorrect," and added that no DPRK military personnel are assigned to the delegation chosen to attend the briefing. Kim also discussed recent reports concerning the depth of the food aid the DPRK n

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I. United States

1. US-DPRK Relations: Food Aid, Briefing

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US State Department spokesman Nick Burns ("STATE DEPARTMENT NOON BRIEFING, FEB. 5," USIA Transcript, 2/6/97) replied to reporters questions concerning conflicting statements by Burns and by the DPRK Ambassador to the UN Kim Hyong-u on whether the scheduled briefing on the four-party peace talks proposal fell through because the US reneged its promise to provide food aid to the DPRK. Burns, referring to Kim's statements on CNN, said: "That was a very interesting interview. We read it quite closely. I mean this quite sincerely. Perhaps something was missed in the translation or just missed in the communication, because what we have done is very clear. The

United States never promised a specific amount of food aid to the North Koreans as an inducement to convince them to come to the table and have a briefing on the Four Party Talks, number one. We did not promise to deliver food or to guarantee commercial shipments of food. But we recently approved an application by a private American grain company for a license to export grain to North Korea. We approved that already. That deal needs to be concluded between that grain company and North Korea. I should also tell you that we have been assiduous in listening to the World Food Program and the other non-profit organizations. When they have come forward with emergency appeals for grain to North Korea, the United States has responded. I said two days ago that we understand the World Food Program is considering another appeal and that we would look very seriously at that appeal. I believe the United States has acted in good faith. It is simply not accurate to say that the United States Government is holding up the talks because we've been straightforward with the North Koreans on what we can do and what we can't do."

The Associated Press ("N.KOREA ACCUSES US OF FOOD DELAY," Copenhagen, Denmark, 2/6/97) reported that DPRK Ambassador Ri Thae-gyun said at a news conference in Copenhagen Thursday that the US is holding up badly needed food shipments and that US leaders were trying to lie their way out of the deal. Ri said the US had promised to send 500,000 tons of food to the DPRK in return for the DPRK's promise to attend the four-party peace talks proposal briefing. Ri dismissed the contention by US State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns on Wednesday that the US had made no such promises. "They make promises but they don't keep them. And later they say they never said something."

Reuters ("OFFICIALS: US MAY SUPPORT N.KOREA FOOD APPEAL," Washington, 2/6/97) reported that the UN World Food Program is expected to make a formal appeal for US\$38 million in new food aid for the DPRK next week, and that US State Department spokesman Nick Burns on Thursday said that the US is likely to respond positively. Burns said, "I think there's going to be an appeal for food by the World Food Program ... It's considering a formal appeal during the next week, similar to one issued last year." Burns added that the US would look at such an appeal "very carefully, consult with South Korea, with our allies and decide on an appropriate response." Burns then reportedly stressed: "I would remind you that we have responded positively to every previous appeal by the World Food Program in the last year or two. We believe there is a serious food problem in North Korea and we're sympathetic to the plight of the North Korean people and we encourage private assistance to the North Koreans." The comments appeared designed to reassure the DPRK that the US sympathizes with its food problems, and to resolve the now open conflict over whether the US promised food aid to the DPRK as a condition of attending the four-party peace talks briefing. The position also sends a signal to the ROK, which has been reluctant to go along with new DPRK requests for assistance.

2. ROK Financial Scandal

The Associated Press (Ju-Yeon Kim, "S. KOREAN BANK HEADS ARRESTED," Seoul, 2/5/97) reported that the presidents of two of the ROK's leading banks, Shin Kwang-shik of Korea First Bank and Woo Chan-mok of Chohung Bank, were arrested Wednesday on charges they received US\$470,000 each in bribes in exchange for loans to the now-bankrupt Hanbo Steel Industry Co. The founder and chairman of Hanbo, Chung Tae-soo, was arrested earlier on bribery charges, and reportedly gave prosecutors a list of politicians he bribed. Kwon Ro-gap, aide to opposition presidential hopeful Kim Dae-jung and a deputy leader of the National Congress for New Politics, admitted he received about US\$188,000 in cash from Hanbo, but called it a legitimate political contribution. Kwon was the first politician to admit receiving money from Hanbo. Kim's party charged that the government was trying to duck responsibility by implicating opposition politicians in the scandal. "The basic point of the Hanbo case is not who received money but who pressured banks to make such astronomical

loans. Can opposition politicians do it?" the opposition party's spokesman, Chung Dong-young, asked in a statement. News reports also implicated Hong In-kil, a close aide to President Kim Young-sam. Hong, now a legislator, denied the reports he received US\$820,000 from Hanbo, but admitted he is acquainted with the Hanbo chief.

3. Russian Nuclear Technology Sales

The Associated Press ("RUSSIA PEDDLES NUKE TECHNOLOGY," Moscow, 2/6/97) reported that the Interfax news agency said Thursday that Russia hopes to sign a preliminary agreement soon with the PRC to help construct a nuclear power plant in the northwestern Chinese province of Gansu. The latest announcement comes only weeks after Russia said it intended to supply two new nuclear power reactors to India. Russia's growing nuclear trade, which reached US\$2 billion in exports last year, taps one of the few Russian products that the world still wants to buy: its nuclear technology. However, the sales are making the US uneasy. US officials have warned Russia that building power plants in countries such as India and Iran means they could potentially use the technology and materials to make nuclear weapons. But for the Russian government, concerns about yawning budget deficits are more pressing than worries about nuclear proliferation, and the more the Russian economy crumbles, the more likely the nuclear trade is to continue, the report said.

II. Republic of Korea

1. DPRK-Taiwan Nuclear Waste Deal

The ROK government yesterday officially requested cooperation from the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) in preventing Taiwan's export of nuclear waste to the DPRK. The ROK Foreign Ministry announced yesterday that ROK Ambassador to Kenya, Park Myong-jun, met with UNEP Secretary-General Elizabeth Dowdeswell on Monday to express the ROK's concern. Ambassador Park also asked for UNEP's cooperation in repealing the contract between Taiwan and the DPRK. (Joong-ang Ilbo, "GOV'T ASK UNEP COOPERATION TO PREVENT TAIWAN'S EXPORT OF NUCLEAR WASTE TO THE NORTH," Seoul, 02/06/97)

2. DPRK Investment Policy Change

Suh Chul, a high ranking official at the DPRK Mission in Geneva said that the DPRK is actively seeking introduction of foreign investment and participation in Western markets, in order to achieve economic growth. He was quoted as saying that the DPRK is now trying to strengthen its ties with Western capitalist countries and revising its laws and regulations to attract foreign capital. The chairman of the DPRK's economic cooperation committee, Kim Jung-woo, reported to the world economic forum in Davos, Switzerland, that the DPRK's Rajin-Sonbong free trade zone has so far attracted foreign investment totaling US\$900 million in 65 projects. (KPS, "DPRK HINTS DRAMATIC POLICY CHANGE," Seoul, 02/06/97) [Ed. note: See also "DPRK Investment Initiatives" in the February 4 Daily Report.]

3. US Evaluation of Russia-PRC Military Potential

A study by the National Defense University of the US Department of Defense, made public on Tuesday, reported that the PRC and Russia could become military peers of the US in their regions within a decade. The report advocated stationing troops overseas and extending nuclear deterrence to dissuade potential "theater peers" like the PRC and Russia from settling disputes by force. Entitled "Strategic Assessment 97," the report added that the presence of nationalistic movements in both countries increases the possibility of conflict. The report went on to say that the PRC and Russia are "likely to mount a low-intensity strategic competition with the US" within their respective

"spheres of influence" within the next decade. Although the study called for a move away from the traditional strategy of the US being able to fight two regional wars at once, it advocated "maintaining an adequate forward presence in concert with regional allies" in order to deter aggression. Superiority in information warfare capabilities was also cited as being important in deterring the PRC and Russia. Prepared by a team of civilian and military fellows at the National Defense University, the document was described as an independent analysis of US force structure and global flash-points, and not a statement of official US policy. (The Korea Times, "CHINA, RUSSIA SEEN AS FUTURE US MILITARY PEERS," Seoul, 02/06/97)

4. Russian Cruiser to Anchor in Incheon

A Russian Navy cruiser of the Russian Pacific Fleet will arrive at Incheon Harbor on February 9 for a five-day visit. The 510-member naval delegation, headed by Vice Admiral Chirokov of the Russian Pacific Fleet, plans to hold a memorial service near Palmido Island in Incheon for those who died during the 1904 Russo-Japanese War. The cruiser will be open to the public on February 10 and 11. (Joong-ang Ilbo, "RUSSIAN NAVY CRUISER TO ARRIVE IN INCHON ON FEB.9," Seoul, 02/06/97)

5. PRC Leadership

The PRC's top leaders have visited ailing patriarch Deng Xiaoping to mark the arrival of the Lunar New Year, the official Xinhua news agency reported Tuesday. In addition to President Jiang Zemin and Premier Li Peng, the group of leaders also included several standing committee members of the PRC's Communist Party Politburo. Deng's health is the subject of frequent speculation, with the latest rumors being sparked by a Hong Kong press report in January that he had lapsed into a coma and was rushed to a Beijing military hospital. On January 7, the foreign ministry sought to quell the rumors by stressing there had been "no major change" in the patriarch's physical condition. Deng was last seen in public during the February 1994 Lunar New Year celebrations, looking feeble and disorientated. (The Korea Times, "TOP CHINESE LEADERS VISIT DENG XIAOPING," Seoul, 02/06/97)

III. Russian Federation

1. RF-DPRK Talks in Pyongyang

INTERFAX News Agency (Moscow, 1/29/97) reported that the RF delegation headed by RF Deputy Foreign Minister Grigoriy Karasin visited the DPRK on January 21-24. According to Mr. Karasin the parties "for the first time sat and discussed in detail all articles" of the new draft of the RF-DPRK treaty. He added that in Pyongyang significant progress had been made concerning a majority of the articles. In Moscow during the Summer-Autumn of 1997, groups of experts will discuss the remaining, disputed articles. Regarding the Korean situation, Mr. Karasin said the RF, wishing to be "a part of an international effort," is "interested in a stable Korea, meaning in the future a united Korea." He added that if the "2+2" formula implementation takes too long, it would be feasible to return to the RF proposal for an international conference. On bilateral relations Mr. Karasin said that the RF is interested in the restoration of Soviet-era plants in the DPRK that today "mainly stay idle."

Izvestia's Gennadiy Charodeyev (WARM RECEPTION IN COLD PYONGYANG," Moscow, 3, 1/28/97) reported that the RF delegation headed by RF Deputy Foreign Minister Grigoriy Karasin felt cold in Pyongyang because of electricity shortages. The delegation discussed the draft new RF-DPRK treaty there. Their DPRK counterparts were reported as reproaching RF for its "passive position" and urging for a wider RF-DPRK political dialogue and a restoration of economic ties. Although DPRK is unhappy that the draft treaty doesn't mention "mutual military assistance," Mr. Karasin said it could

well be "signed this year." He also confirmed an earlier RF proposal for a large international conference on Korea. An agreement was signed on mutual travel. As different from the previous practices, all travel is to take place on a visa basis, and that includes 20 thousand DPRK timber-cutters still working in RF. The delegation visited the late Kim Il-sung Memorial, but didn't meet with the present DPRK leader Kim Jong-il.

2. DPRK Food Crisis

Sovetskaya Rossia ("THESE DAYS," Moscow, 3, 2/4/97) cited a DPRK Central News Agency report stating that the DPRK presently possesses only half of the amount of grain needed to feed its population. The report blamed the shortage on the recent "unusual natural disasters which rendered significant damage to its agriculture and other sectors of the economy, thus causing temporary problems in food supplies to the population."

3. RF Plans No Su-37 Exports to ROK

Rossiyskaya Gazeta ("XXI CENTURY PLANE FIRST TO GO TO RUSSIAN UNITS," Moscow, 7, 1/29/97) reported the RF Air Force Headquarters Press Service as dismissing the reports about alleged plans for a large delivery to the ROK of RF-made Su-37 planes with follow-up technology supplies. According to the Headquarters, these twenty-first century aircraft, technologically several years ahead of US-made F-16s, will first go to RF Air Force units and only later will be offered on world markets.

4. RF Council on Foreign Policy

INTERFAX News agency (Moscow, 1/27/97) reported that RF President Boris Yeltsin signed a decree appointing the members of the Council on Foreign Policy and placing it under the authority of the RF President. The Council consists of President Boris Yeltsin, Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, Presidential Administration Head Anatoliy Chubais, Foreign Affairs Minister Yevgeniy Primakov, and eight other officials.

5. RF-PRC Border Demarcation Issues

Nezavisimaia Gazeta's Aleksandr Reutov ("UNSOLVED BORDER PROBLEMS ARE FRAUGHT WITH CONFRONTATION," Moscow, 4, 1/31/97) published an interview with Mr. Ghenrikh Kireyev, head of the RF Delegation in the Joint RF-PRC Demarcation Commission. Mr. Kireyev reported that during the final stage of the demarcation process, 603 out of the 1188 border marks were to be set up by the RF. Of the total border length in question, more than one half has been documented and confirmed by both countries. He pointed out that the RF Chita Region Administration has been cooperative and has understood the national importance of the demarcation. At the same time, Mr. Kireyev dismissed as groundless the anti-PRC allegations made by some in the RF Primorskiy Area. He stressed the necessity of completing the demarcation process successfully, as unsolved border problems can lead to future territorial claims and confrontations.

6. RF Far Easterners Fear PRC Chemicals

Izvestia's Ghenrikh Sharipov ("CHINA THREATENING BIROBIDJAN," Moscow, 1, 2/1/97) reported that people in the RF Far Eastern Jewish Autonomous Region are busy buying gas masks. The panic resulted from persistent rumors that a chemical weapons demolition plant is under construction in the adjacent PRC Heilujiang Province. Nikolai Volkov, the Region Governor, allegedly has sent a secret request to the RF Government for explanation.

7. RF "Nakhodka" Tanker Disaster Aftermath

Segodnya's Vasily Golovnin ("JAPANESE CURSE RUSSIAN RESCUE TEAM," Moscow, 2, 1/31/97) reported that some Japanese officials and private citizens harshly criticized the two RF ships sent to alleviate the damage caused by the RF "Nakhodka" tanker disaster in the Sea of Japan, saying they were inept. Segodnya confirmed that those ships, as well as a third ship that recently joined them, possess no equipment that is effective against the thin surface pollution. Kommersant-DAILY's Denis Dyomkin, Aleksandr Maltsev, Vadim Bratukhin, Leonid Berres ("NAKHODKA" HAS LEFT MANY SPOTS," Moscow, 6, 2/4/97) reported that RF law-enforcing bodies investigating the "Nakhodka" disaster have reported that "the tanker was exploded in order to hide the traces of oil products worth a bit less than US\$3 million that had been stolen." The half page article dwells at length on "a number of strange circumstances," such as the origin of the ship's transmitting signals and the inability of the crew to save vital documents. RF Transportation Minister Nikolai Tsakh previously claimed the disaster was caused by "an impact of outside forces, most probably in a form of an explosion."

8. RF-Mongolia Military Links

Izvestia's Boris Vinogradov ("MOSCOW AND ULAN BATOR RECALLED THEIR FORMER MILITARY ALLIANCE," Moscow, 3, 2/4/97) reported that a meeting took place in Moscow between RF Defense Minister Igor Rodionov and Mongolia's Defense Minister Dambyn Dorligjav on a visit here. Mongolia has been proposing the visit for over a year to discuss a range of problems including the military property left in Mongolia by evacuated RF troops, Mongolia's debts for previous Soviet arms deliveries, and implementing the RF-Mongolia Military Cooperation Agreement signed in 1993 but currently non-functional. Mongolia is also interested in RF assistance to modernize its 100,000 strong army. Izvestia's author reported that RF Defense Minister agreed to render such assistance in exchange for Mongolia's support of RF opposition to NATO enlargement.

9 . PRC Central Media on NATO Enlargement

Pravda-Five ("IN BRIEF LINE," Moscow, 1, 2/4/97) reported that the Beijing-published "Renmin Ribao" newspaper on January 31 printed an editorial which was critical of the developments in the Western military alliances. The editorial said that the strengthening of military blocks undermines international trust and criticized both NATO enlargement plans in Europe and the US-Japan-Australia "security triangle" in the Pacific. Pravda-Five stressed that this is the first time that the main PRC newspaper spoke out against NATO enlargement, saying it reflects the PRC's growing concern over the "establishment of American hegemony."

10. PRC-US Relations

Segodnya's Ivan Shomov ("U.S. ADMINISTRATION SHOWS A PRINCIPLED STAND ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN CHINA," Moscow, 4, 2/1/97) reported that US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright plans to visit the PRC later this February. This comes after she issued a report criticizing the human rights situation in the PRC. Segodnya pointed out that the previous Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, had been reluctant "to irritate" the PRC on this issue, but the new US Administration appears to be tougher.

11. PRC Public Censorship of Mass Media

Segodnya ("PUBLIC CENSORSHIP INTRODUCED IN CHINA," Moscow, 4, 1/28/97) reported that the PRC, in the name of "public control over the journalist profession," has advertised a phone number by which anybody can report "breaches of moral norms or an incorrect style of work" seen in journalism.

12. PRC-British Relations Over Hong Kong Worsen

Izvestia's Yuriy Savenkov ("BEIJING-LONDON WAR OF NERVES ON THE EVE OF HONG

KONG FLAG CHANGE," Moscow, 3, 1/28/97) reported that Mr. Kris Patten, the last British Governor of Hong Kong, predicted serious legal confusion after the hand-over on July 1 of this year. Patten's fears stem from the fact that the PRC refuses to deal with Hong Kong's democratically-elected Legislative Council while the city is still under British control.

13. PRC-South Africa Weapons Links

Segodnya's Ivan Shomov ("PRETORIA READY TO SELL ARMS TO BEIJING," Moscow, 4, 2/4/97) citing the Johannesburg newspaper, "Rapport," reported that South Africa is holding negotiations with the PRC about deliveries of military equipment worth US\$220 million. South Africa's largest opposition party, the National Party, is also in favor of the deal. Its leaders argued that if South Africa follows the US by turning the human rights issue into a 'foreign policy absolute,' then it won't be able to compete in the world weapons market.

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