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I. United States

1. DPRK Nuclear Facility Re-activation

The Washington Post (Doug Struck, "REACTOR RESTARTED, NORTH KOREA SAYS PLUTONIUM COULD BE USED FOR BOMBS," Seoul, 02/06/03) reported that the DPRK said today it had carried out its vow to restart a small nuclear power plant that US officials suspect will be used to produce plutonium for weapons. In an announcement carried by its state-run news agency, the DPRK said the plant had resumed "normal footing" operation. The DPRK statement said the small research plant at Yongbyon, 55 miles north of the capital, would produce electricity for the power-starved nation. But experts say the five-megawatt plant is not large enough to provide any meaningful electrical power. By their account, its main purpose would be to irradiate natural uranium rods to produce plutonium that could be used in nuclear weapons. Experts say it would take about one year of operation for the small plant to produce enough fuel for a bomb of the size dropped on Hiroshima. More immediately

worrisome for the analysts is the disposition of about 8,000 fuel rods produced when the nuclear plant was operating and stored at the site since it was closed. That material can be processed at a reopened plant nearby into weapons-grade fuel in two to four weeks, nuclear experts said.

2. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Re-activation?

Reuters ("SOUTH KOREA UNABLE TO CONFIRM NORTH REACTOR MOVE-YONHAP," Seoul, 02/06/03) reported that the ROK was unable to confirm on Thursday that the DPRK had restarted a nuclear reactor, Yonhap news agency quoted a Seoul official as saying. "So far, nobody has confirmed a restart of the DPRK's nuclear facilities," the ROK news agency quoted the ROK government official as saying. An overnight statement from the DPRK Foreign Ministry saying that the DPRK "is now putting the operation of its nuclear facilities for the production of electricity on a normal footing after their restart" pointed to a likely move to restart the facility at Yongbyon, the official was quoted as saying. "Carefully going over the text of the Korean Central News Agency report it looks more like language saying they were about to restart the facility, rather than they had actually restarted it," the unnamed official said. "But because they have already declared their aim to restart it, the possibility that they will move to reactivate the nuclear facility is great," the official said.

3. DPRK on Nuke Facility Attack

The Associated Press (Sang-Huh Choe, "NORTH KOREA WARNS US ON PRE-EMPTIVE MOVES," Seoul, 02/06/03) and the Associated Press (Jae-Suk Yoo, "NORTH KOREA WARNS 'TOTAL WAR' IN CASE OF US ATTACK ON NUKE FACILITIES," Seoul, 02/06/03) reported that the DPRK warned Thursday that US pre-emptive attacks on its nuclear facilities would provoke a "total war." In an English-language statement, the DPRK said Wednesday that it "is now putting the operation of its nuclear facilities for the production of electricity on a normal footing after their restart." That triggered fears that Pyongyang was poised to produce weapons materials. However, a Korean-language statement monitored by the ROK's Yonhap news agency referred only to "our process to restart nuclear facilities for generating electricity and normalize their operation." Both DPRK statements were carried on KCNA, the DPRK's official news agency. "We are trying various channels to confirm what it means," an official at the ROK Foreign Ministry said on condition of anonymity. The DPRK said Thursday it was prepared to fight a war with the US. "When the US makes a surprise attack on our peaceful facilities, it will spark off a total war," said the DPRK's state-run newspaper Rodong Sinmun in a commentary carried by the DPRK's official news agency, KCNA. In Pyongyang, a spokesman and deputy director at the DPRK's Foreign Ministry told the London-based Guardian newspaper that his country was entitled to launch a pre-emptive strike against the United States.

4. US Response to DPRK War Threat

The Associated Press (Ron Fournier, "WHITE HOUSE DISMISSES NORTH KOREA THREATS," Washington, 02/06/03), Reuters ("US READY FOR 'ANY CONTINGENCIES' WITH NORTH KOREA," Washington, 02/06/03) and the Associated Press (Ron Fournier, "WHITE HOUSE DISMISSES NORTH KOREA TALK," Washington, 02/06/03) reported that the US White House on Thursday criticized the DPRK for talking about potential war over its nuclear ambitions, warning that the US has "robust plans for any contingencies," including military action. Presidential spokesman Ari Fleischer said there is a "real cause for concern" over the DPRK's assertions Wednesday that pre-emptive attacks on its nuclear facilities would trigger "total war." He reiterated that President Bush believes the standoff can be resolved peacefully. "This kind of talk only hurts the DPRK," which faces

international isolation, the spokesman said. "That's the real cause for concern ... but we always have contingency plans." "The United States is very prepared with robust plans for any contingencies," he told reporters. Afterward, Fleischer said he was talking about military contingencies.

5. Senate Foreign Relations on Bush DPRK Policy

The Washington Post (Peter Slevin, "BIDEN, LUGAR ASSAIL NORTH KOREA POLICYSENATORS CALL FOR WHITE HOUSE TO OPEN TALKS WITH PYONGYANG ON NUCLEAR BID," 02/06/03) reports that senior members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee yesterday criticized the Bush administration's policy toward the DPRK as inadequate and called on the president to initiate talks to halt the DPRK government's nuclear program. Sen. Joseph R. Biden Jr. (D-Del.) charged that the US strategy is "largely reactive and predictable" and said the administration needs to regain the initiative. Committee Chairman Richard G. Lugar (R-Ind.) offered measured praise but said the White House should show "immediate US leadership" by opening a broad dialogue with the DPRK and designating a senior official to coordinate policy. Lugar said many senators believe US policy is on hold while the administration is preoccupied with Iraq and the campaign to remove President Saddam Hussein and his weapons of mass destruction. The result, he said leaves the US in a more difficult situation. The senators' comments came during testimony by Deputy Secretary of State Richard L. Armitage, who said the administration will hold direct talks with DPRK, but not until a new ROK government is in place and the timing seems right. The new government takes office February 24. "We're absolutely going to have to talk with them bilaterally. We acknowledge that," Armitage said.

6. Inter-Korean Border Opening

The New York Times (Don Kirk, "KOREAN BORDER OPENS TO TRAFFIC AS BUS TOUR LEAVES FOR THE NORTH," Seoul, 02/06/03) reported that buses carrying 100 ROK citizens crossed the DPRK frontier today, opening the first road for normal traffic between the Koreas since the Korean War. President Kim Dae Jung, in Seoul, viewed the mission as a triumph for his so-called sunshine policy of reconciliation with the DPRK and another reason not to investigate the secret transfer of nearly $200 million to the DPRK through Hyundai Merchant Marine. "This is the first time in half a century that we went to North Korea through the demilitarized zone," said President Kim, through his spokeswoman, referring to the 2.5-mile-wide strip between the Koreas. In an indirect reference to the transfer of funds to the DPRK, Kim was quoted by his spokeswoman as saying there were "things which cannot be revealed in dealing with North Korea." Prosecutors, responding to Kim's concerns about the effect of the payoff on inter-Korean reconciliation, have suspended their investigation. Members of the conservative opposition have called for passage of a bill that would require that a special prosecutor take over the case.

7. DPRK Weapons Proliferation

The New York Times (James Dao, "US OFFICIAL SAYS NORTH KOREA COULD SELL BOMB MATERIAL," Washington, 02/06/03) reported that a senior Bush administration official warned today that the DPRK, if allowed to reprocess spent nuclear fuel rods, could sell some of that fissile material to terrorists and other enemies of the US who are seeking to build nuclear weapons. The official, Deputy Secretary of State Richard L. Armitage, told senators on Capitol Hill that the DPRK's recent moves toward restarting a plutonium reprocessing facility could enable the country to build four to six new nuclear weapons within months. But Armitage also predicted that the DPRK, which is struggling to feed its people, would have sufficient bomb-grade plutonium to sell or trade to "a

nonstate actor or a rogue state." "I believe that the arms race in North Korea pales next to the possibility of proliferation, which is our major fear, from North Korea - that she would pass on fissile material and other nuclear technology to either transnational actors or to rogue states," Armitage said. Armitage also confirmed to the senators that Pakistan had helped North Korea develop its nuclear weapons program, saying technology transfers between the two countries had gone "both ways." He declined to provide details, however, saying Pakistan had assured the administration that such transfers had ended.

8. US-Russia Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty

The New York Times (James Dao, "US-RUSSIA ATOMIC ARMS PACT WINS SENATE PANEL'S BACKING," Washington, 02/06/03) reported that the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee unanimously endorsed a treaty today that obliges the US and Russia to cut their strategic nuclear arsenals by two-thirds over the next 10 years, granting President Bush a long-delayed foreign policy victory. The 19-to-0 vote sends the treaty, which was signed by Bush and President Vladimir V. Putin in Moscow last May, to the Republican-controlled Senate, which is expected to approve it later this month. Along with the administration's withdrawal last year from the Antiballistic Missile Treaty of 1972 and its decision to build a missile defense system, the arms reduction accord is a centerpiece of Bush's efforts to redefine US-Russian relations. The pact, known as the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty, will reduce Russia's and the US' deployed nuclear arsenals to between 1,700 and 2,200 warheads, from about 6,000 each. Bush vowed to cut the US arsenal even if Russia did not match the reductions. But Russia did agree to cuts, provided that they were enshrined in a treaty. The new accord does not require the actual destruction of the warheads. Instead it allows both sides to keep the weapons in storage, so they can be reactivated and reinstalled on missiles or bombers on relatively short notice. The Pentagon has said it intends to keep a bit more than 2,000 warheads on "active reserve," in case of new nuclear threats, and nearly 5,000 inactive weapons that would take longer to redeploy. Unlike past arms control pacts, the treaty does not set out a timetable for cuts, requiring only that the total number of strategic weapons does not exceed 2,200 on Dec. 31, 2012. The treaty expires on that day if the two sides do not choose to renew it. In addition, both countries reserve the right to terminate the agreement on three months' notice, half the notification period of most previous arms control treaties.

9. Japan on US-Iraq Situation

The Associated Press (Kenji Hall, "KOIZUMI SAYS JAPAN WANTS UN RESOLUTION BEFORE POSSIBLE US-LED COALITION ATTACK ON IRAQ," Tokyo, 02/06/03) reported that Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi said Thursday that Japan wants a new United Nations resolution before the United States decides to attack Iraq, his spokeswoman said. "In the future, we will be monitoring the debate, while taking a stance that is in accordance with the international community," he was quoted as saying at his official residence by his spokeswoman, Misako Kaji. Kaji said he made the comment in response to Japanese reporters' questions. Following Powell's speech, Koizumi told Parliament Thursday that the US evidence had deepened suspicions over Iraq's possession of weapons of mass destruction. He stressed that Iraq holds the key to whether a peaceful solution can be reached. Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi, in a statement, also stressed that the onus is on Iraq. "For the peaceful solution to this problem, Japan strongly requests Iraq aggressively move to erase doubts and carry out all Security Council resolutions, beginning with those on its abandonment of weapons of mass destruction," she said. Japan hasn't clearly stated whether it is in favor of using force against Iraq, or whether Japan would contribute troops for a US-led strike.

10. Canada on DPRK Situation

Reuters ("CANADA URGES NORTH KOREA TO SHOW RESTRAINT," Ottawa, 02/06/03) reported that Canada, one of the few nations to have diplomatic relations with the DPRK, said on Thursday it had urged the DPRK to show restraint in an increasingly tense nuclear stand-off with the US. But Foreign Minister Bill Graham distanced himself from the idea of sending a Canadian delegation to the DPRK, saying he did not want to do anything which could harm existing efforts to end the crisis. The DPRK said on Wednesday it had restarted the atomic plant at the heart of its suspected nuclear arms program. A senior official was subsequently quoted as saying the DPRK might strike at US forces preemptively. "It's a serious problem...we're addressing it. I've written to my North Korean (counterpart) urging restraint," Foreign Minister Bill Graham told reporters.

11. Asian Response to US Iraq Attack

CNN News ("CAUTIOUS ASIAN REACTION TO US EVIDENCE," United Nations, 02/06/03) reports that Asian reaction to the US case against Iraq has been cautious with major ally Japan stopping short of openly backing military action without United Nations endorsement and the PRC stressing that a political solution is still the best strategy. Speaking after US Secretary of State Colin Powell's address to the U.N. Security Council, PRC Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan said the latest information would help weapons inspectors complete their task and that evidence should be handed over to them immediately. Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi meanwhile told a parliamentary panel Thursday that suspicions about Iraq's weapons of mass destruction had now increased. "Whether the situation can be resolved peacefully depends on Iraq," Koizumi stated. "Japan must respond as a responsible member of international society and an ally of the United States." Analysts suggest Japan will lend symbolic moral support to any US moves against Iraq but its constitution -- plus public opinion -- would prevent it providing practical military assistance. The PRC's Tang said it was the view of the U.N. arms inspectors that "now they are not in a position to draw conclusions, and they have suggested continuing the inspections." "We should respect the views of the two U.N. agencies and support the continuation of their work," he said. "As long as there is still the slightest hope for political settlement, we should exert our utmost to achieve that," he said. Tang also urged Iraq to adopt a more proactive approach and provide further explanations and clarifications as soon as possible and to cooperate with the inspection process.

12. DPRK on ROK US Forces

The Korean Central News Agency of DPRK ("US BEGINS BOLSTERING ITS FORCES IN KOREAN PENINSULA," Pyongyang, 02/06/03) carried a story that read: the US imperialists have begun bolstering the huge aggression forces in the Korean Peninsula under the pretext of the nuclear issue, according to KBS and CBS of South Korea. The US Department of Defense is examining a plan to send another aircraft carrier to the waters off the Korean Peninsula as a "show of force." The US imperialists have long had a carrier forward deployed in the pacific region, at a Japanese port, but because of the possibility the carrier, kitty hawk, could be ordered to the Persian Gulf, officials are considering sending another to the Korean region. Timed to coincide with US Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld's disclosure of the fact that pentagon is also considering adding more air force presence on the Korean Peninsula, the US ordered "B-52", "B-1" and two dozens of long-range bombers to get ready for deployment on Guam island for the purpose of supporting its forces in South Korea. For this deployment, about 2,000 troops, mostly air force personnel, were ordered to be ready to move. Several fighter bombers and "U-2" reconnaissance aircraft could be added to US Forces in South Korea and Japan, press reports said. Meanwhile, the US also ordered thousands of soldiers in South Korea to extend their stay even after the expiry of their service term there. All these facts go to

prove that the war hysteria of the US imperialists keen to isolate and stifle the DPRK under the pretext of the nuclear issue has reached a more reckless phase.

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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