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I. United States

1. US Spying on DPRK

The New York Times (Tim Weiner, "U.S. OFFICIAL LEAVES AUSTRIA AFTER BEING CAUGHT WIRETAPPING," Washington, 11/06/97) and United Press International (Sid Balman Jr., "U.S. CAUGHT SPYING ON NORTH KOREA," Washington, 11/05/97) reported that US government officials said Wednesday that a US intelligence official has left Austria after being arrested for wiretapping the phone of a DPRK diplomat in Vienna. US officials refused to publicly identify the arrested individual, who claimed diplomatic status when confronted by Austrian police last week.

Nancy Beck, a press officer in the US State Department, said, "The person in question was a U.S. Embassy employee and was on the diplomatic list." Unnamed US officials, however, said that the man was on loan from the CIA. The Austrian Foreign Ministry summoned the US deputy chief of mission in Vienna, Joan Corbett, and demanded the man be recalled to Washington. State Department spokesman James P. Rubin stated, "We agreed with the Austrian government that, in light of the allegations, it was better the individual was withdrawn." The Austrian newspaper Kurier reported that the police first became aware of the case in June, after a public-services worker noticed that an electronic relay had been built into the telephone line at the home of the first secretary of the DPRK Embassy in Vienna, thus switching calls from outside the residence over to a third-party line. The police traced that line to a rented apartment in Vienna, where it was found to be attached to a tape recorder. The newspaper said the arrested man told the police that he was in charge of changing the tapes in the apartment. US officials said that the case was part of a larger US intelligence program aimed at spying on DPRK officials worldwide, in the hope of determining the thinking of DPRK leaders, and, if possible, of recruiting DPRK diplomats as spies for the US. There was no immediate reaction from the DPRK government.

2. DPRK Health System

Reuters (Robert Evans, "N.KOREA HEALTH SERVICES SEEN CLOSE TO COLLAPSE," Geneva, 11/05/97) reported that the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) said in a statement on Wednesday that health services in the DPRK are close to collapse and any epidemic could lead to disastrous consequences across the country. "To prevent the complete collapse of the health sector in North Korea, the Red Cross is set to increase its medical programme in the country by over 50 percent," the statement added. It quoted IFRC official Geoff Dennis, just back from a 10-day tour of regions hit by floods in 1995 and 1996, as saying that a shortage of drugs and medical equipment "means that people don't go to hospitals any more." At the same time the IFRC said that there is strong evidence of continuing malnutrition, although outright famine appears to have been averted for the present. The IFRC statement also said that the current harvest in the DPRK is likely to yield over three million tons of food, leaving a shortfall of at least one million tons which would have to be covered by humanitarian deliveries from abroad. "Our concern is that supplies will have dried up by next spring when we will face huge shortages," the statement quoted Dennis as saying

3. US Company Opens DPRK Office

United Press International ("DHL OPENS OFFICE IN N.KOREA," Seoul, 11/06/97) and the Associated Press ("DHL STARTS SERVICE IN NORTH KOREA," Seoul 11/06/97) reported that the DPRK Central Broadcasting Station said Thursday that the US delivery company DHL has opened an office in Pyongyang. The broadcast said, "The DHL office will contribute to boosting economic ties with other countries by delivering urgent documents, samples, and parcels via the fastest means and routes." The ROK Yonhap News Agency reported that an opening ceremony was held at Pyongyang's Yanggakdo Hotel on Wednesday.

4. DPRK Drug Trafficking

The Los Angeles Times (Jim Mann, "DIRTY BUSINESS AT THE BORDER IN N. KOREA," Washington 11/06/97) reported that the DPRK has been producing opium. The article said that the US State Department, in a written response to questions raised by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee some two months ago, said, "We are concerned that North Korea may have substantially increased its opium production in recent years." The article quoted a British correspondent for the Guardian newspaper as saying that on at least five occasions during the previous year trains from Pyongyang to Moscow were turned back because Russian border guards found large amounts of raw opium

stashed beneath the seats. The article stated, "The opium production is, of course, another sign of the economic desperation of the North Korean regime. And it shows that North Korea continues to operate far outside the norms of international behavior, even as it seeks aid from abroad to help feed its people."

5. DPRK Food Aid

The Los Angeles Times (Jim Mann, "DIRTY BUSINESS AT THE BORDER IN N. KOREA," Washington 11/06/97) reported that a statement by the State Department to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee said that PRC food aid to the DPRK is provided without monitoring. "Thus, the use of that food is entirely up to [DPRK] authorities, and part of it probably has gone to the military," the statement added. The article also quoted an unnamed administration official as saying that PRC officials have admitted to the US that they are helping to feed the DPRK military. The author suggested that "Maybe Clinton and his foreign policy advisors are tacitly going along with Chinese handouts to the North Korean army as part of some deal or arrangement in which China will eventually help change or keep control over North Korea." The article concluded, "In North Korea, Clinton may have at work a secret policy based on secret diplomacy, with secret benefits the American people may some day discover. One hopes so because otherwise, his North Korea policy would make no sense at all."

6. US-Japan Military Exercises

Reuters (Yvonne Chang, "JAPAN, U.S. START LARGE-SCALE WAR GAMES," Tokyo, 11/06/97) reported that flotillas from the Japanese and US navies started large-scale war games called the "Maritime Self-Defense Force Exercise" in the Sea of Japan on Thursday, their first maneuvers since the announcement of a new bilateral security arrangement in September. Japanese military analysts have said the latest exercise focuses on contingency measures in a future conflict involving the DPRK. The DPRK state-run Korean Central News Agency stated, "We cannot but regard the premeditated and intentional war game as an open infringement upon the sovereignty of our republic and as a declaration of total war."

7. ROK-Japan Territorial Dispute

The AP-Dow Jones News Service ("S. KOREA COMPLETES DOCK ON DISPUTED ISLETS; JAPAN PROTESTS," Seoul, 11/06/97) reported that the ROK on Thursday dedicated a small, concrete wharf among the disputed islets called Tokdo in Korea and Takeshima in Japan. The dedication ceremony was held on Ulnung-do, a major ROK island 25 miles from Tokdo. ROK officials said the ceremony could not be held at Tokdo itself because of high waves there, but the Yonhap national news agency said it was moved to avoid diplomatic friction with Japan. ROK officials said that the Japan Foreign Ministry called in ROK Ambassador Kim Tae-ji to demand that the ROK dismantle the dock.

8. Pending Congressional Action on PRC

The Washington Times (Tom Carter, "HOUSE TAKES TOUGH STANCE TOWARD CHINA," Washington, 11/06/97), the Associated Press (Jim Abrams, "HOUSE TAKES TOUGH ACTION ON CHINA," Washington, 11/06/97), and the New York Times (Neil A. Lewis, "JIANG GONE, HOUSE BEGINS VENTING ANGER AGAINST CHINA," Washington, 11/06/97) reported that the US House of Representatives voted 394 to 29 on Wednesday to extend from 30 days to 120 days the time allowed for Congress to review President Bill Clinton's certification that the PRC has halted nuclear cooperation with Iran. It also voted 416-5 to assign six new diplomats to the US Embassy in Beijing and at consulates around the PRC to monitor human rights. The votes were part of a package of bills regarding the PRC introduced Wednesday. Other bills would help Taiwan develop a missile defense

system and gain entry into the World Trade Organization. Representative Gerald Solomon (R-NY) said that the bills are a "comprehensive approach in dealing with the myriad of problems presented by the criminal behavior of the communist dictatorship in Beijing." The Senate has no plans to take up the measures until next year. An unnamed US State Department official stated, "There are some positive elements in the packet of legislation. However, we are concerned that the overwhelming thrust of the bills is on punitive measures."

II. Republic of Korea

1. ROK-DPRK Economic Cooperation

The ROK plans to discuss methods for guaranteeing safety on the projected Sokcho-Rajin ferry route with the DPRK during the Tumen River Area Development Program (TRADP), to be held in Beijing November 11-18. The PRC and the two Koreas have agreed in principle to develop a tourist course linking Sokcho on the ROK east coast with Rajin-Sonbong (DPRK) and Hunchun (PRC), by sea and by road respectively. The problem of guaranteeing the safety of ROK tourists taking this route is yet to be resolved. (KPS, "SOKCHO-NAJIN CAR FERRY ROUTE TO BE DISCUSSED AT TRADP MEETING," 11/05/97)

2. DPRK Public Execution

Japan's Kyodo network reported October 6 that Seo Kwan-he, secretary of agriculture for the DPRK Workers Party, was executed in public last September. One of the ten party secretaries, Seo was ranked 26th in the power hierarchy of the DPRK. The report also added, quoting tourists who observed the execution, that 17 more officials from the Kim Il-sung Young Socialist League were also executed for charges including fraud and corruption in front of 20-30 thousand people gathered around the center of Pyongyang. (Joongang Ilbo, "DPRK HIGH OFFICIAL GETS EXECUTED IN PUBLIC: KYODO REPORTS," 11/05/97)

3. ROK Presidential Election

ROK Democratic Party (DP) leader Cho Soon on Wednesday expressed a strong intention to join with New Korea Party (NKP) leader Lee Hoi-chang. At a press conference following his regional campaign tour, Cho said that he had already started a dialogue with senior NKP members for a possible coalition between his splinter DP and the NKP. Cho clearly stated that Lee of the ruling party must be the first choice for a possible coalition since he is a presidential candidate chosen by a democratic nomination process whereas the other contender, Rhee In-je, has no moral justification to be in the race. However, Cho added that his proposal must not be immediately understood as conceding his presidential candidacy to others. Cho said he also has not ruled out the possibility of uniting with Rhee if he displays a humble and open-minded attitude. (Korea Times, Kim Hyoung-min, "CHO SOON LEANS TOWARD COALITION WITH LEE HOI-CHANG," 11/05/97)

4. Russia-PRC Relations

Russia and the PRC will set aside differences over their 4,300 kilometer (3,000-mile) border when Russian President Boris Yeltsin visits Beijing next week, sources from both countries said Tuesday. "A political document will be signed announcing the conclusion of the process of delineating the border between Russia and the PRC," PRC ambassador to Russia Li Fenglin said at a press conference. Yeltsin and his PRC counterpart Jiang Zemin will also sign a document on the joint use of water resources along their common border, Kremlin spokesman Sergei Yastrzhembsky told the press. Yeltsin's visit to the PRC November 9-11 will also include commercial talks. The Kremlin spokesman hinted that the question of human rights violations in the PRC would also be raised,

although more discreetly than they were during Jiang's visit to Washington last week. (Korea Times, "RUSSIA, PRC TO SET ASIDE BORDER DIFFERENCES TO TALK BUSINESS," 11/05/97)

III. Announcement

1. Japan-Korea Conference

The Hudson Institute and the East Asian Security Study Group, Japan, announced an upcoming "Conference on Japan and Korea's Future: A Japanese-Korean-US Trilateral Dialogue Supported by the Japan Foundation." The conference will take place on Friday and Saturday December 5-6 1997 in Tokyo at the Japan Foundation International Conference Hall. There will be simultaneous Japanese-English interpretation. For further information and to RSVP please contact:

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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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