NAPSNet Daily Report 08 April, 1997

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 08 April, 1997", NAPSNet Daily Report, April 08, 1997, https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-08-april-1997/

In today's Report:

I. United States

- 1. DPRK Famine Situation
- 2. US-DPRK Missile Talks
- 3. US Military Head in ROK
- 4. US Defense Secretary Warns US Troops in Japan
- 5. US Debate Over Chemical Weapons Convention Ratification

II. Republic of Korea

- 1. US-ROK Missile Deal
- 2. ROK-DPRK Trade
- 3. DPRK Famine Situation
- 4. DPRK-Taiwan Nuclear Waste Deal

III. Russian Federation

- 1. RF Scholar on ROK-DPRK Relations
- 2. DPRK Food Problems
- 3. RF Defense Minister Favors Asia Pacific Cooperation
- 4. RF-PRC Military Trade
- 5. RF-Ukraine-PRC Controversy
- 6. RF-PRC Political Party Links
- 7. RF Diplomat on RF-PRC Relations
- 8. RF Media on the US-PRC Meeting
- 9. RF Media on Gingrich Visit to Taiwan
- 10. RF Media On Japan's Defense Agency Intelligence Center

I. United States

1. DPRK Famine Situation

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Reuters ("NORTH KOREAN FAMINE AID EFFORTS GAIN MOMENTUM," Tokyo, 4/8/97) and the Associated Press ("REP. STUNNED BY N. KOREA FAMINE," Tokyo, 4/8/97) reported that on Tuesday international relief efforts for North Korea gained momentum as fears about its military intentions gave way to urgent action to avert the "h

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Reuters ("NORTH KOREAN FAMINE AID EFFORTS GAIN MOMENTUM," Tokyo, 4/8/97) and the Associated Press ("REP. STUNNED BY N. KOREA FAMINE," Tokyo, 4/8/97) reported that on Tuesday international relief efforts for North Korea gained momentum as fears about its military intentions gave way to urgent action to avert the "hell" of a severe famine. Underscoring the urgency, the DPRK told aid agencies in Pyongyang that 134 children had died of malnutrition so far in the country's food crisis, the first figure it has given on deaths, according to Hans Olsen of the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) speaking Tuesday in Geneva. Food supplies have been stopped to all 199 nurseries and kindergartens in Huichon, a 2 1/2-hour drive from the capital, cutting off an important source of nourishment for 8,800 children, Olsen said. Many countries have been slow to respond to international appeals for food aid to the DPRK out of fears that donations would be diverted to the 1.1 million-strong armed forces, who consume about a quarter of the state's budget. In particular, the ROK has withheld massive relief shipments while the DPRK resists joining the proposed four-party peace talks, while Japan has refused to open its vast reserves of surplus rice to the DPRK in light of new evidence that DPRK agents kidnapped several Japanese citizens in the 1970s. However, US grain trader Cargill Inc.'s announcement that it had reached agreement with the DPRK to supply wheat, along with growing relief efforts by the ROK, indicates that the tide is turning toward an all-out effort to help Pyongyang. The Cargill deal is the first direct sale of US grain to the DPRK since the 1950-53 Korean War. In Seoul, traders close to the Cargill deal said North Korea had agreed to

barter about 4,000 tons of zinc for about 20,000 tons of wheat. Meanwhile, in the ROK, religious and civic groups announced plans to ship 110,000 tons of corn to their brethren, following last week's move by the ROK Red Cross to send more than US$1 million worth of food and vegetable seed to the DPRK. Separately last week, the Seoul government lifted a ban on private organizations providing rice to Pyongyang and allowed local business groups to join food aid programs.

The Associated Press ("REP. STUNNED BY N. KOREA FAMINE," Tokyo, 4/8/97) reported that US Congressional Representative Tony P. Hall, a Democrat from Ohio, just completing a four-day tour of the DPRK, said that everywhere he looked there were signs of horror: families eating grass, weeds and bark; orphans whose growth has been stunted by hunger and diarrhea; people going bald for lack of nutrients; hospitals running short of medicine and fuel. "I was stunned by what I saw ... and by how much worse conditions have gotten since I was there last August," Hall said. "Evidence of slow starvation on a massive scale was plain wherever we made an effort to look," he told reporters. Hall urged the world to do far more to help feed the DPRK, despite the faults of its secretive and repressive communist government and massive military. The North has spent huge amounts of money on arms, while reducing spending on food rations for its people. "The time has come for the United States ... this region, European nations, officials at the United Nations and private aid organizations to ... devise a comprehensive plan to help the people of North Korea escape starvation this spring," said Hall, whose fact-finding mission was funded by the US government. In an effort to ensure that he was not witnessing scenes that had been choreographed, Hall made unannounced stops and used a Korean-speaking doctor from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Hall said that many North Koreans told him that their daily government rations had recently been cut to 100-150 grams of rice a day, barely 500 calories. People were supplementing their diets by eating grass, weeds and bark in rural areas, where many trees have been cut down for fuel. Hall said that he saw soldiers whose uniforms hung off their bodies, indicating even Pyongyang's elite military was suffering. In nurseries, clinics and hospitals, food shortages and bad water are causing respiratory problems, intestinal diseases and balding scalps in children, Hall said.

2. US-DPRK Missile Talks

The Associated Press ("U.S., N. KOREA TO TALK ON MISSILES," Washington, 4/8/97) reported that US State Department Spokesman Nicholas Burns said Tuesday that the US and the DPRK will hold talks on DPRK missile sales to the Middle East, the first such talks in almost a year. The talks will be held soon, but the date and location have not yet been set, Burns said. In the first round of talks, held last April in Berlin, the US sought a freeze on DPRK missile exports and production and DPRK membership of the international agreement to restrict such exports. At the time of the 1996 talks, the US expressed satisfaction with the outcome, but there have been no discussions since then. According to US officials, the DPRK has sold long-range Scud missiles to Iran and Syria.

3. US Military Head in ROK

The Associated Press ("U.S. OFFICIAL IN S. KOREA FOR TALKS," Seoul, 4/8/97) reported that Gen. John Shalikashvili, the chairman of the US joint chiefs of staff, met with top ROK leaders Tuesday to discuss security on the Korean peninsula. Shalikashvili began the first of three days of talks by going over defense issues with ROK Defense Minister Kim Dong-jin and Foreign Minister Yoo Chong-ha. Later, representatives of the two nations reaffirmed their military alliance. Shalikashvili will also call on President Kim Young-sam and visit the ROK's highly fortified border with the DPRK before leaving Thursday. The visit comes a day before Defense Secretary William Cohen begins a three-day visit to South Korea.

4. US Defense Secretary Warns US Troops in Japan

The Associated Press ("COHEN ADDRESSES TROOPS IN JAPAN," Yokota Air Base, Japan, 4/8/97) reported that US Defense Secretary William Cohen, mindful of strains on the US-Japan military alliance, on Tuesday pointedly reminded US troops to avoid the "one bad deed" that can spoil relations. "Everything you do reflects upon our country, wherever you are deployed," Cohen said during breakfast with troops at this American air base near Tokyo. "You're not only soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines, you also are ambassadors, and you have to keep that in mind," Cohen said. "You do 100 good deeds and you will get credit for it. On the other hand, all you have to have is one bad deed and that makes the headline news and changes people's perceptions." On his first visit to Asia as defense secretary, the former Maine senator spent the day giving pep talks to troops, stressing the importance of keeping good relations with Japan and telling them their work is appreciated at home. "It is crucial this bond that we have with the Japanese people," Cohen said. The military alliance has been under particular strain since a September 1995 rape of a 12-year-old Okinawan girl by three US servicemen, and just last week a US sailor at Yokosuka was put under investigation for allegedly assaulting a 21-year-old Japanese woman. Such incidents have fueled calls for reductions in the US military presence in Japan, which includes the stationing of 47,000 US troops.

5. US Debate Over Chemical Weapons Convention Ratification

Three former defense secretaries, testifying before the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee ("FORMER DEFENSE CHIEFS TESTIFY AGAINST CHEMICAL WEAPONS PACT," USIA Report, 4/8/97) spoke out against Senate ratification of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). James Schlesinger, Donald Rumsfeld, and Caspar Weinberger all argued that the treaty is not in the national security interest of the United States. Former Defense Secretary Dick Cheney submitted a letter to the committee also indicating his opposition. The testimonies supported Committee Chairman Senator Jesse Helms' strong condemnation of the treaty. "This is a dangerous and defective treaty," said Helms. "It is not global, it is not verifiable, it is not constitutional, and it won't work." Schlesinger offered a prepared statement detailing the case as he sees it against the CWC, concluding, "This treaty will not serve to banish the threat of chemical weapons." Rumsfeld reiterated the arguments against the treaty based on verifiability and membership. Weinberger stressed that the CWC is "badly flawed" and "cannot be verified or enforced," adding that "my motive is the security of the United States." However, Senator Richard Lugar, an influential senior Republican on the committee, expressed support for CWC, saying if the US does not sign it, "we will have no role on the governing body" and little influence with potential members who otherwise might sign CWC. Meanwhile, Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle indicated that unless Republican leaders allow the full Senate to vote on the CWC, he may block action on other legislation.

US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, testifying later before the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee ("ALBRIGHT STATEMENT BEFORE SFRC ON CWC APRIL 8," USIA Transcript, 4/8/97) urged the Committee and the Senate to take the lead internationally by ratifying the Chemical Weapons Convention before April 29. The US "must lead in banning chemical weapons," Albright said. "Rogue states" -- such as Iran, Iraq, Libya -- "will never accept a prohibition on chemical weapons if America stays out, keeps them company and gives them cover," Albright said. "We will not have the standing to mobilize our allies to support strong action against violators if we ourselves have refused to join the treaty being violated." Responding to SFRC chairman Jesse Helms' past charges that compliance with the treaty is impossible to verify, Albright acknowledged that "no treaty is 100 percent verifiable, but this treaty provides us valuable tools for monitoring chemical weapons proliferation world-wide." Albright detailed the consequences if the US fails to ratify the CWC before April 29, which include forfeiture of a seat on the treaty's Executive Council for at least one year, thereby costing the United States the chance to help draft the rules by which the Convention will be enforced; loss of the opportunity to participate in the critical first sessions of the

Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, which monitors compliance; loss of the right to help administer and conduct inspections; and potential serious economic loss to US chemical manufacturers because of the trade restrictions imposed on non-member states.

II. Republic of Korea

1. US-ROK Missile Deal

Defense Secretary William Cohen voiced US opposition Saturday to a proposed sale of Russian SA-12 surface-to-air missiles to the ROK, warning of political repercussions in Washington. "It won't play well in Congress at all," Cohen, a former Republican senator, told reporters traveling with him to Japan and the ROK on his first Asian trip as defense secretary. The ROK has held talks off and on with the Russians for the past six months about acquiring the SA-12 instead of the US-built Patriot air defenses, which Washington is pushing. While not opposed to a purchase of two to four batteries of the Russian surface-to-air missiles for testing purposes, US officials say deploying the SA-12s instead of the Patriots would put US warplanes in Korea at risk, because the Patriot is designed to clearly distinguish US-built aircraft as a friend and not a foe. The SA-12 is considered as capable as any equivalent surface-to-air missile in the US arsenal, and the ROK could take the missiles as in kind payment against a US$1.3 billion Russian debt with Seoul. Besides the SA-12, US officials say the Russians have discussed sales of ammunition, firearms, trucks, radar and aircraft with the ROK. Cohen, who arrives in Japan Monday, will be in Seoul from Wednesday to Friday for talks with ROK leaders that are expected to focus mainly on the situation in the DPRK. (Korea Times, "US WARNS ROK OF POLITICAL REPERCUSSIONS FOR PURCHASE OF RUSSIAN SA-12 MISSILES," 04/08/97)

A sense of welcome among the ROK public is perhaps wearing thin for US Defense Secretary William Cohen, who will meet ROK defense leaders and visit US troops in his "get-acquainted" visit beginning today. The public's wariness toward Cohen is largely attributed to his remarks warning of political repercussions should the ROK buy Russian-made S-300 surface-to-air missiles instead of US-made Patriots. "I don't think that Mr. Cohen was very diplomatic about the issue," a senior official at the ROK Defense Ministry said. However, the Defense Ministry has been trying to put a positive spin on the issue, knowing that Cohen is the defense chief of the ROK's most important military ally, even suggesting that the ROK wants to buy US weapons in the future. When the Korean public feels it is being leaned on by the US, it boils. This unwritten rule appears to be pertinent to Cohen's remarks. Many observers say that after his first visit here, Cohen will learn how to better deal with the ROK public's sentiments. (Korea Times, "COHEN'S REMARKS DEAL ERODE SUPPORT FOR HIS SEOUL VISIT," 04/08/97)

2. ROK-DPRK Trade

The level of inter-Korean trade in commodities during the first two months of this year jumped to US$35 million, up 14 percent from a year ago, marking a sharp turnaround from the 12.3 percent drop recorded last year, trade sources said yesterday. In the Jan.-Feb. period, shipments from the ROK, owing largely to heavy grant-type aids, soared 115.8 percent from the same period of 1996, the sources said. This year, private organizations in the ROK have continued to provide food aid and other daily necessities to the destitute DPRK, they added. Imports from the DPRK, on the other hand, dropped 18.2 percent from US$23.43 million to US$19.17 million over the cited period. The sources attributed the sharp decline in imports to the drastic shrinkage in inter-Korean trade in the wake of the DPRK submarine infiltration incident beginning last September. "Increases in imports from the North are highly unlikely, but shipments from the South are expected to show a steady rise," said an official engaged in inter-Korean trade. (Korea Herald, "INTER-KOREA TRADE INCREASES 14 PERCENT DURING JANUARY-FEBRUARY PERIOD," 04/08/97)

3. DPRK Famine Situation

Six to eight million DPRK citizens are facing death by starvation in a disaster of "gigantic proportions," US Congressman Tony Hall warned here Tuesday after a fact finding mission to the country. "I have seen enough hunger in my life to say that North Korea is rapidly descending into the hell of severe famine," said the Democratic Congressman from Ohio. He said humanitarian agencies and the US State Department "put the number of people at risk of death between six and eight million." Meanwhile, in Seoul, officials said the ROK was considering providing further aid to the DPRK after the United Nations announced an urgent humanitarian aid appeal totaling US$126.2 million. (Korea Times, "MILLIONS OF N. KOREA FACING FAMINE DISASTER," 04/08/97)

The United Nations on Monday appealed for a total of US$126.2 million in urgent humanitarian aid mainly aimed at averting famine in the DPRK. The appeal was launched at a news conference here by UN undersecretary-general for humanitarian affairs Yasushi Akashi, who described the situation in the DPRK as "a humanitarian disaster in the making." Akashi said that the bulk of the funds would be earmarked for emergency food aid from now until March next year. According to Akashi, with the next harvest taking place in October, the most critical period for the DPRK population would be between July and September. The other UN agencies participating in the joint appeal are the UN Development Program, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Health Organization. World Food Program official Douglas Casson Coutts told the news conference that in response to its initial February appeal for US$41.6 million, the WFP had so far received US$17 million from the US, the ROK and Australia. Akashi noted that the UN appeal represented an "infinitesimal" amount, given the DPRK's current grain shortfall of 2.36 million tons. Akashi also noted that the last UN appeal for the DPRK, totaling US$43.6 million for the period July 1996 to March 1997, was 99 percent successful in the food sector. (Korea Times, "UN APPEAL FOR 126.2MIL. IN URGENT AID FOR P'YANG, 04/08/97)

4. DPRK-Taiwan Nuclear Waste Deal

Taiwanese President Lee Teng-hui told a high-level US Congressional delegation that Taipei would shelve a plan to ship nuclear waste to the DPRK if it doesn't meet safety requirements, a government official said yesterday. This is the first indication that Taiwan would abandon its plan to ship up to 200,000 tons of radioactive waste to the DPRK under a secret deal reached in January. When traveling with US House Speaker Newt Gingrich, Congressman Bereuter, head of Asia-Pacific affairs, made remarks that are regarded as the strongest criticism against Taiwan's plan to ship nuclear waste to the DPRK. Meanwhile, Gingrich told President Lee that Washington had been deeply interested in the shipment of nuclear waste because Taiwan's plan might endanger 37,000 US servicemen stationed in the ROK. The Taiwanese president said that the plan was strictly a commercial deal only involving the Taiwan Power Co. and not the Taipei government. He added that the Taiwanese government had not yet authorized the export of nuclear waste because it had not had sufficient time to closely scrutinize technical problems related to safety requirements. (Korea Times, "TAIPEI RECONSIDERING SHIPPING N-WASTE TO NK," 04/08/97)

III. Russian Federation

1. RF Scholar on ROK-DPRK Relations

Novoye Vremya's Evgeniy Bajanov ("WHO WILL TEACH KOREANS TO AGREE WITH EACH OTHER," 28, #10, 4/2/97) wrote that "presently an extremely favorable situation has shaped up for unification of two Koreas," mainly due to the high level of understanding between the US, PRC, Japan, and Russia concerning the state of both the ROK and the DPRK. The ROK seems to be angry with the US for its DPRK policy, which actually is aimed just "not to corner" the latter. Bajanov

believes that instead of exerting a head-on pressure on the DPRK, the DPRK should be assisted in taking the course of long needed reforms. To that end it is reasonable to allow Kim Jong-il feel more secure in his power position, to let the regime emerge from its international isolation, and to improve living standards in the DPRK. Thus in 1997, two scenarios are possible: either the ROK will "cope with its pride" and start pursuing a "cold blooded" calculated long term policy towards the DPRK, or everything will roll down along the same old path with "underground tunnels," "submarines," "protests and counterprotests." It is clear that the international support to the ROK in pursuing an involvement policy towards the DPRK will be guaranteed.

2. DPRK Food Problems

Izvestia's Elmar Gusseinov ("DPRK POPULATION STARVING AND LEARNING TO REPEAL AIR ATTACK THREATS," Moscow, 3, 4/4/97) reported that the average DPRK citizen's daily food ration is 100 grams (350 calories), there is a food shortfall of 1 million tons for the year, and several thousand people died from hunger in the DPRK during the last year and a half. The major food aid donors to the DPRK are the PRC (which at the end of 1996 allocated 100 thousand tons of grain), the ROK (which recently ended an 18 month food aid embargo), and the UN World Food Program (which is the major food aid source). Meanwhile the DPRK leaders have undertaken large scale joint military-civilian anti-aircraft defense exercises in an attempt to distract its population and raise its spirit.

3. RF Defense Minister Favors Asia Pacific Cooperation

Nezavisimaia gazeta (KOKOSHIN FOR STEPPING UP THE COOPERATION WITH THE APR," Moscow, 2, 3/27/97) reported that at a tripartite RF-US-Japan Moscow scholarly seminar, Andrey Kokoshin, RF First Deputy Defense Minister, called for the stepping up RF cooperation with the Asia Pacific Region countries. He is known as an efficient promoter of relations within the RF-PRC-India "triangle."

4. RF-PRC Military Trade

Nezavisimoye Voyennoye Obozreniye ("IN BRIEF - RUSSIA-CHINA," Moscow, 2, 4/5-11/97, # 13(40)) reported that according to the RF Defense Ministry, the RF will increase its deliveries of anti-aircraft missiles and equipment to the PRC. "Tor-M1" and "Tunguska" anti-aircraft complexes and some others are among the chief items of interest to the PRC. Some of them have already been exported by the RF to some Asia Pacific countries.

5. RF-Ukraine-PRC Controversy

Segodnya's Ivan Shomov ("CRIMEA PENINSULA IN EXCHANGE FOR TAIWAN ISLAND," Moscow, 1, 4, 4/3/97) reported that PRC State Council Vice Premier U Bango, while visiting Kiev, Ukraine, stated that the PRC is giving Ukraine a US$250 thousand grant. This is in contrast to last summer's deterioration in PRC-Ukraine relations following an alleged secret meeting between Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma and Taiwanese Premier Lian Chan. Presently, Ukrainian Supreme Soviet Vice Speaker Aleksandr Moroz assured Mr.U Bango that Ukraine considers Taiwan as "a province of China and recognizes PRC Government as the only legitimate government of the country." In response, Mr.U Bango said that the PRC "unreservedly recognizes the belonging of Sebastopol and the Crimea to Ukraine." The statement caused "slight perplexion" at the RF Foreign Ministry where they cannot recall a case of the PRC "unreservedly" doing that at all levels, international organizations included. Mr.U Bango's statement is said to have caused a "dual feeling" in the context of the "strategic partnership" often mentioned by both Moscow and Beijing, and just three weeks before PRC Chairman Jiang Zemin visits the RF

6. RF-PRC Political Party Links

Nezavisimaia gazeta's Sergey Mulin ("'RIGHT-WING' OHR SPEAKING COMMON LANGUAGE WITH 'LEFT-WING' CPC," Moscow, 2, 4/3/97) dwelled on the irony of the fact that while contacts between the RF Communist Party and the Communist Party of China are not strong, the CPC Central Committee signed an "unprecedented interparty agreement" on cooperation with the "Our Home Russia" party led by RF Premier Viktor Chernomyrdin during a visit of OHR high level delegates to the PRC. While cooperating with PRC Communists and proclaiming itself to be a "centrist" party, the OHR party actually is seen as moving toward the right within the RF political spectrum.

7. RF Diplomat on RF-PRC Relations

Pravda-5's Andrey Krushinskiy ("COMMON WORRIES, COMMON HOPES," 3, 3/27/97) published a half page interview with Konstantin Vnukov, Head of the PRC Division in the First Asia Department of the RF Foreign Ministry, who discussed RF-PRC common positions on international affairs, including the attitude to NATO enlargement, the historical traditions of Russia and China. The interviewee criticized the politicians and members of the mass media in the RF who attacked the RF-PRC border demarcation process.

8. RF Media on the US-PRC Meeting

Nezavisimaia gazeta's Dmitriy Kosyrev ("CHINA AND THE USA SMILED TO EACH OTHER," Moscow, 4, 4/2/97) commented on US Vice President Albert Gore's visit to the PRC and the details of the agreements reached there. Concerning RF-PRC relations in this context, Koyrev said that the popular RF idea of countering RF foreign policy failures in the West with an alliance with "Eastern giants" is "primitive and illusory." He feels that Moscow-Beijing-Washington relations create a "delicate and stable triangle" wherein the PRC needs both sides and also "gains from their rivalry," for two reasons. First, alliances with the RF cannot substitute for US technology, and the PRC will continue its economic cooperation with the US if there are no "linkages" and other demands from the latter. Second, PRC-RF cooperation in the military sphere, particularly the import of RF naval and aircraft items, rules out such demands and lets the PRC feel safe in its bargaining with the US. For the RF such a role is "valuable political capital" to be used. It must not be lost through making the PRC a small change coin in the RF's bargaining with the West. The author concluded that this stable RF-PRC-US triangle makes a "revolutionary diplomatic breakthrough" very improbable.

9. RF Media on Gingrich Visit to Taiwan

Segodnya ("USA PROPOSING DEFENSE TO TAIWAN," Moscow, 4, 4/3/97) reported that Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the US House of Representatives, was greeted yesterday in Taipei as a "national hero." Mr. Gingrich became the first person in that official position to visit Taiwan since the 1979 severance of US-ROC diplomatic relations. He publicly promised that the US will defend Taiwan in case of PRC aggression. In Beijing, authorities expressed their discontent and said that the US has no right to interfere into the internal affairs of the PRC.

10. RF Media On Japan's Defense Agency Intelligence Center

Nezavisimoye Voyennoye Obozreniye ("IN BRIEF - JAPAN," Moscow, 1, 4/5-11/97, # 13(40)) reported that the creation of the Intelligence Center within Japan's National Defense Agency caused concerns in the PRC and the ROK. The article gave some details about the structure and the staff of the Center.

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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.
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