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I. United States

1. US-DPRK Talks

Reuters ("U.S.-N.KOREA SITE TALKS STALEMATE CONTINUES," New York, 03/07/99) reported that the US and the DPRK failed to reach agreement after talks Saturday on US access to a DPRK

underground construction site. The two sides did not hold a formal session Sunday, but talks were expected to resume Monday afternoon. DPRK Deputy Foreign Minister Kim Gye-gwan stated, "We tried to explore any way to break the stalemate we are in. However, to our regret, we did not break the stalemate we are now put into." Kim added that the US was seeking something "far beyond" what the DPRK was prepared to negotiate. The chief US negotiator, Charles Kartman, stated, "We want to remove our suspicions through access to the site."

2. Perry's Trip to ROK and Japan

The Associated Press ("U.S. OFFICIAL ARRIVES IN N. [sic] KOREA," Seoul, 03/08/99) reported that William Perry, the US policy coordinator on the DPRK, arrived in Seoul on Monday for talks on DPRK policy. Perry was scheduled to meet with ROK President Kim Dae-jung, Foreign and Trade Minister Hong Soon-young, and national security adviser Lim Dong-won. While endorsing engagement, Perry said that the US and the ROK agree "we must stand together" to resolve problems with the DPRK. Perry will travel to Japan on Tuesday.

The Pacific Stars And Stripes (Jim Lea, "PERRY TO JUGGLE DIFFERING VIEWS ON NK STRATEGY," Seoul. 03/09/99, 3) reported that the Japanese daily Asahi Shimbun on Sunday said that Japanese officials are expected to ask US DPRK policy coordinator William Perry to recommend that the US take a tougher stand against the DPRK. The newspaper quoted an unnamed Foreign Ministry source as saying that Japan "cannot take a flexible stand" toward the DPRK "until there is a clear-cut pledge by Pyongyang to give up on its nuclear and missile programs and its missile tests and exports with verifiable measures guaranteed." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for March 8.]

3. DPRK Missile Threat

The Associated Press carried an analytical article (Joseph Coleman, "N. KOREA REMAINS MISSILE THREAT," Tokyo, 03/05/99) which said that the outcome of discussions among the US, the ROK, and Japan over DPRK policy will largely determine the ultimate wisdom or foolishness of the DPRK's rocket launch last August. Jonathan Pollack, senior specialist on East Asian Security affairs at the Rand Corporation, argued, "They have certainly gotten everyone's attention, and that's no mean feat." Masao Okonogi of Tokyo's Keio University stated, "In a way, the situation is back to what it was in August. Sanctions have failed, so Tokyo needs a new strategy." Paek Hak-soon, an analyst at the Sejong Research Institute, said that the missile test was a gambit by the DPRK to get a wider compensation deal than the one offered under the 1994 Agreed Framework. Former ROK Foreign Minister Han Sung-joo argued, "Pyongyang had a very strong incentive to show the world it is still robust in some critical areas."

4. ROK-DPRK Prisoner Exchange

The Associated Press ("N. KOREA REJECTS SWAP OF PRISONERS," Seoul, 03/08/99) reported that the DPRK on Monday rejected an ROK proposal to swap political and war prisoners. The DPRK's official communist party organ, Rodong Sinmun, stated, "It is the height of obstinacy for the chief executive to suggest exchanging the unconverted long-term prisoners, who wish to be repatriated to the North at the earliest possible date, for the defectors to the North, who have categorically refused to go back to South Korea."

5. Hyundai Founder's Trip to DPRK

Reuters ("HYUNDAI FOUNDER TO VISIT NORTH KOREA AGAIN - RADIO," Seoul, 03/07/99) reported that the Korea Broadcasting System radio quoted officials at Asan Corporation, a Hyundai unit in charge of DPRK projects, as saying on Sunday that Hyundai founder Chung Ju-yung will visit the DPRK for the second time this year on March 9- 12. The broadcast said that Chung would discuss various cooperative projects with DPRK officials. It added that high- ranking Hyundai officials, including Chung's son, Hyundai co-Chairman Chung Mong-hun, would accompany him on his trip.

6. Possibility of Japanese Airstrikes on DPRK

Dow Jones Newswires ("CHINA CRITICISES JAPAN FOR PREEMPTIVE STRIKE REMARKS," Beijing, 03/08/99) reported that PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhu Bangzao criticized Japanese Defense Agency chief Hosei Norota's reported remarks that Japan would consider a preemptive attack on the DPRK. Zhu was quoted as saying by the official Xinhua News Agency, "We are quite surprised at the comments of Hosei Norota, which obviously run counter to the current trend of maintaining peace and stability." He added, "Such remarks would only lead to new confrontations and tensions in the region and be quite disturbing for Japan's neighbors." He called on Japan to "engage itself more in the affairs that serve peace and stability in the region." Japan's Kyodo News reported that Norota told a parliamentary committee on Monday that Japan could defend itself even before it had been attacked. Kyodo quoted Norota as adding, however, that Japan would only defend itself and that it would not do so merely on fears that it would be attacked.

The Asian Wall Street Journal carried an editorial ("A CRY IN THE DARK," 03/08/99) which said that Japanese Defense Agency chief Hosei Norota's remarks on airstrikes against the DPRK are notable because they departed from the usual pacifism of post-World War II Japan. The article said that, while the US is supposed to protect Japan against the DPRK, "To the average Japanese citizen, however, the U.S. shield may be looking rather thin and tarnished these days. Washington and Seoul appear less concerned about Pyongyang's missiles than they do about befriending the regime there." The article criticized US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright for not telling the PRC that "as long as China and North Korea target them, America and its friends need a missile defense system to protect themselves." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for March 8.]

7. DPRK-Japan Relations

Agence France-Presse (Shino Yuasa, "JAPAN LAUNCHES MISSION TO WARM TIES WITH NKOREA, RETURNS DEAD SOLDIERS," Tokyo, 03/05/99) reported that Japanese ruling party lawmaker Masaaki Nakayama left Friday on a four-day visit to Pyongyang to try to resume stalled normalization talks. Nakayama was also scheduled to stop over in Beijing. Meanwhile, Japanese officials returned the remains of four DPRK soldiers who had washed up on Japan's shores to the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan, designated by the DPRK Red Cross Society as its proxy. The four uniformed DPRK soldiers were among six found dead on Japanese shores in December 1998 and January this year. The bodies are to be shipped by the association from the Japanese port of Nagoya to Pyongyang next week. The remains of the two other DPRK soldiers are to be returned after their identities have been confirmed, officials said. Military analysts said the soldiers might have sought to flee the DPRK by sea. They discounted the possibility of infiltration attempts because the soldiers were wearing uniforms and badges.

8. DPRK Elections

The Associated Press ("NORTH KOREA HOLDS LOCAL ELECTIONS," Seoul, 03/07/99) reported that the DPRK held its first local elections in five years on Sunday to elect about 20,000 deputies to serve four years on provincial, city, and county councils. The DPRK's Korean Central News Agency quoted election officials as saying that the elections proceeded smoothly "with all the voters turning out with high revolutionary enthusiasm." ROK analysts said that the elections are designed to strengthen Kim Jong-il's hold on power by putting in place many young loyalists. Paik Seung-ki, a political science professor at Kyongwon University, stated, "The local elections are another sign that Kim Jong-il is in firm control."

9. DPRK Famine

The Associated Press ("NKOREA MAY FACE NEW FOOD SHORTAGE," Beijing, 03/06/99) reported that Kathi Zellweger of the Catholic relief group Caritas said Saturday that DPRK food supplies will run out by the end of April, and the next harvest is not expected until the end of May. Zellweger stated, "It looks like a difficult spring again." She added that, during her recently completed trip to the DPRK, she saw few babies and pregnant women, and believed the birth rate was far lower than normal. She said that pregnant women were thin, and newborns generally weighed less than 4 1/2 pounds, less than the minimum birth weight of 5 1/2 pounds recommended by the World Health Organization. She also said that agriculture in the DPRK is beginning to make improvements, but the changes will take a long time.

Agence France-Presse ("NORTH KOREA EASES RESTRICTIONS ON DESERTERS AS FAMINE BITES," Seoul, 03/05/99) reported that ROK officials said Friday that the DPRK has relaxed punishment to its citizens caught fleeing the country in search of food. An unnamed official of the government-run National Institute for Reunification said stated, "According to information received, between two and three million people have died over the past two to three years." The claims came in a White Paper on the state of human rights in the DPRK issued by the ROK's Unification Ministry. The report added that, despite the relaxation of punishment for those fleeing the country, overall human rights are scarcely improved. It said, that more than 200,000 political prisoners, including some who were "abducted" from the ROK, are in custody in 10 places across the country where they are deprived of basic rights and subjected to "atrocities." The paper estimated that as many as 200,000 DPRK citizens were illegally living in the PRC, Russia, and other neighboring countries. Intelligence sources in the ROK said that DPRK border guards are no longer issued with bullets to open fire on those escaping the country. The report also said that around four million DPRK citizens were suffering from tuberculosis.

10. Perry's Trip to Taiwan, PRC

Dow Jones Newswires ("TAIWAN PRES TELLS US ENVOY THAT CHINA CAUSES SECURITY THREAT," Taipei, 03/08/99) and Reuters (Alice Hung, "U.S. STRADDLES CHINA-TAIWAN PERCEPTION GAP," Taipei, 03/08/99) reported that Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui on Monday told visiting former US Defense Secretary William Perry that the PRC is the major security threat in Asia. Lee was quoted by the official Central News Agency as saying, "Put simply, China is still the major source of volatility in Asia." Lee added that there would be no need for a missile defense system "if China didn't consider Taiwan an enemy" and abandoned its large-scale missile installations along the mainland coast. Lee told Perry he was baffled by the PRC's angry response to Theater Missile Defense at a time when the proposal still remains years from completion. In brief comments, Perry said he was on an unofficial visit and was not carrying any specific message to Taiwan on behalf of US President Bill Clinton. He said he was merely offering a few "constructive and creative" proposals to the governments in the PRC and Taiwan. He added, "I can say we have had very

positive, very constructive discussions." President Lee's office quoted Perry as saying that he had urged the PRC to halt its reported missile buildup when he met PRC President Jiang Zemin in Beijing on Friday.

11. Theater Missile Defense

The Associated Press (John Leicester, "CHINA WARNS AGAINST MISSILE DEFENSE," Beijing, 03/07/99), the Washington Post (John Pomfret, "BEIJING PRESSES ITS CASE AGAINST MISSILE SHIELD OFFICIAL WARNS U.S. ON TIES WITH ASIA." Beijing, 03/08/99, A13) and Reuters (Matt Pottinger, "CHINA WARNS U.S. AND TAIWAN ON MISSILE DEFENSE PLAN," Beijing, 03/07/99) reported that PRC Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan said Sunday that US and Japanese research into a shield against missiles attacks will threaten world stability and give Japan far stronger defenses than it needs. Tang said that development of the system will "exert a negative impact on the global and regional strategic balance and stability into the next century. So China is very much concerned about it." Asked whether the PRC would take military action if the US sold the system to Taiwan, Tang replied, "The Chinese government and the Chinese people would of course take the necessary strong response." Tang also stated, "If some people intend to include Taiwan under theater missile defense, that would amount to an encroachment on China's sovereignty and territorial integrity and also be an obstruction to the great cause of peaceful reunification of the motherland." [Ed. note: This article was one of the top stories in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for March 8.]

12. Alleged PRC Nuclear Espionage

The New York Times (James Risen and Jeff Gerth, "CHINA STOLE NUCLEAR SECRETS FROM LOS ALAMOS, U.S. OFFICIALS SAY," Washington, 03/06/99, 1) reported that US officials said that the theft of US nuclear secrets from Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico helped the PRC to produce small warheads that could be launched from a single missile at multiple targets. The espionage is believed to have occurred in the mid-1980s, but was not detected until 1995. Government investigators suspect that a Chinese-American scientist at Los Alamos laboratory was involved in the espionage. Senior administration officials said that the suspect failed a lie detector test in February. One anonymous US official asserted that the White House sought to minimize the espionage issue because it "conflicted with their China policy. It undercut the administration's efforts to have a strategic partnership with the Chinese." However, Gary Samore, a senior National Security Council official, stated, "The idea that we tried to cover up or downplay these allegations to limit the damage to United States-Chinese relations is absolutely wrong." An unnamed US official said that the Department of Energy (DOE) and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) disagreed over the extent to which the PRC benefited from such espionage. The official stated, "The areas of agreement between DOE and CIA were that China definitely benefited from access to U.S. nuclear weapons information that was obtained from open sources, conversations with DOE scientists in the U.S. and China, and espionage. The disagreement is in the area of specific nuclear weapons designs.... CIA thinks the Chinese have benefited from a variety of sources, including from the Russians and their own indigenous efforts." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for March 8.]

The Washington Post (Walter Pincus, "SUSPECT IN PROBE OF CHINA ATOMIC SPYING FAILS POLYGRAPH," 03/07/99, A19) reported that an unnamed White House official on Saturday denied a New York Times report that the Clinton administration had sought to minimize PRC espionage because it was seeking to establish a strategic partnership with the Beijing government. The official stated, "We recognize as a fact of international life that countries spy on each other, but we have

other strategic interests to pursue. We carry on with a lot of countries, including allies, that we feel are spying on us.... There are very few countries we could cooperate with if spying were a defining issue."

Reuters (David Storey, "US SAYS CHINESE NUCLEAR SPYING DID SERIOUS DAMAGE," Washington, 03/08/99), the Washington Times (Joyce Howard Price, "WHITE HOUSE CRITICIZED ON RESPONSE TO TECHNOLOGY THEFT BY CHINA," 03/08/99), and the New York Times (David E. Sanger, "CLINTON AIDES ADMIT LAPSES ON ESPIONAGE BY CHINESE," Washington, 03/07/99, 11) reported that US Energy Secretary Bill Richardson said Monday that the leak of nuclear secrets to the PRC in the 1980s did serious damage. Richardson stated, "We don't know the extent of the full damage. It is serious but the FBI and our law enforcement people at Los Alamos are pursuing this vigorously." He denied charges, however, that the administration failed to react decisively after discovering the espionage. He argued, "We have moved vigorously, the president, the national security adviser, the FBI, when we learned of these damaging allegations. We investigated. We now have in place some very vigorous measures." He added, "We want to engage the Chinese but this is the kind of activity we don't find acceptable and we have vigorously told the Chinese of this." Senate Intelligence Committee Chairman Richard Shelby, Republican- Alabama, said Sunday that he would call hearings on the issue. Shelby stated, "We've been prodding the administration to do more, to tighten up security. I think they're beginning to but it's been a long time. They could have done more immediately.... It will damage, if it hasn't already damaged, our national security in a big, big way." James R. Lilley, US ambassador to the PRC from 1989 to 1991, said in an interview on Saturday, "It is quite clear now that things were far too casual. This has been going on for a long, long time. We had Ministry of State Security defectors and other Chinese who became agents, and they made it clear that this was a top priority of their industrial and intelligence apparatus." He added, however, that the US should not disrupt its dealings with the PRC because of the spying. Lilley stated, "You've got to get some maturity into the relationship with China." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for March 8.]

13. PRC Reaction to Espionage Allegations

The Chicago Tribune (Liz Sly, "CHINA DENIES STEALING U.S. NUCLEAR ARMS TECHNOLOGY," Beijing, 03/08/99) and the New York Times (Erik Eckholm, "CHINA CALLS ASSERTION THAT IT STOLE U.S. NUCLEAR-ARMS DESIGNS 'UNFOUNDED'," Beijing, 03/08/99) reported that PRC Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan on Sunday dismissed a report that it stole nuclear secrets from the US. Tang stated, "The report The New York Times printed is very irresponsible. It is also without basis." He added, "There are some people who want to stop the United States from exporting normal high-technology products to China. I think this will not be beneficial to the interests of the United States." [Ed. note: This article was one of the top stories in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for March 8.]

II. Republic of Korea

1. Perry's Visit to ROK

Korea Times ("PERRY TO DISCUSS NORTH KOREA POLICY," Seoul, 03/09/99) reported that former US Defense Secretary William Perry arrived in Seoul on Monday amid mounting speculation that he may reveal the outcome of his DPRK policy review, which many fear could include policy recommendations incompatible with ROK President Kim Dae-jung's trademark "Sunshine Policy." Perry was scheduled to hold a breakfast meeting Tuesday with ROK Foreign Affairs-Trade Minister

Hong Soon-young and senior presidential secretary for foreign affairs and national security Lim Dong-won. He was to visit Chong Wa Dae in the afternoon to make a courtesy call on President Kim Dae-jung before leaving for Japan Tuesday night to meet top Japanese policymakers, including Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi. Perry and ROK officials are expected to launch consultations on how to narrow the possible disparity between Perry's future policy recommendations to the Clinton administration and President Kim's "Sunshine Policy."

Korea Herald ("PERRY'S VISIT CRUCIAL IN JOINT STANCE TOWARD PYONGYANG," Seoul, 03/09/99) reported that US DPRK policy coordinator William Perry flew into Seoul Monday night to iron out any differences between the ROK and the US in their joint policies on the DPRK. The former US defense secretary was to pay a courtesy call on ROK President Kim Dae-jung to clarify his position on what is alleged to be growing US skepticism on Kim's engagement policy as expressed in his latest book, said officials at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Perry's visit to Seoul, the second of its kind, will provide crucial momentum in coordinating the two countries' DPRK policies in the future, the officials said. Perry is expected to update his draft report on US policy toward the DPRK by explaining its contents to ROK officials and listening to feedback, before presenting it to President Clinton by the end of his month. It is his second Asian swing of three nations in four months, and also includes the PRC and Japan.

2. ROK-US Security Cooperation

Korea Herald ("PRESIDENT INSISTS SEOUL, WASHINGTON MAINTAIN IDEAL SECURITY COOPERATION," Seoul, 03/09/99) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-jung on Sunday tried to dispel concern that a conflict may arise between the ROK and the US about how to deal with the DPRK. "The cooperative South Korea- U.S. relationship in security is ideal," Kim said in a speech at the 55th commencement of the Korea Military Academy (KMA) in northeastern Seoul. Kim said that the ROK could overcome the economic crisis over the past year partly thanks to the maintenance of solid national security. "More than anything else, we have revitalized the alliance formed in blood between South Korea and the United States, which is the central axis of security," he said. "Security cooperation between our two countries, strengthened through my exchange of visits with US President Bill Clinton, has become a safety valve for the deterrence of war on the Korean Peninsula." The President emphasized the importance of security cooperation with the United States as his policy of engaging DPRK is being put to the test.

3. DPRK Views of US Missile Defense

Korea Herald ("NORTH KOREA WARNS AGAINST U.S. MISSILE SYSTEM," Seoul, 03/08/99) reported that the DPRK on Saturday warned the US against plans to establish a missile defense system, saying it would not just "sit and watch" such a move. "The United States is bent on creating a missile defense system to realize its ambition of global domination," said a spokesman for DPRK's institute for arms reduction and peace in a statement. The US is accelerating such a scheme, seriously threatening world peace and the security of Northeast Asia, he was reported as saying by a DPRK broadcasting station. The statement expressed particularly strong discontent with the US allegation that the defense system was a response to the DPRK's missile launch.

4. UNC-DPRK Generals' Talks

Korea Herald ("UNC, NORTH KOREAN GENERALS HOLD SECURITY TALKS TODAY," Seoul, 03/09/99) reported that UN Command (UNC) generals and their DPRK counterparts were scheduled

to have their fifth meeting on Monday at Panmunjom to continue discussion on ways to avert potential accidents caused by "millennium bug" computer chaos. The UNC side suggested consultation of the Y2K bug problems in the last meeting, held on February 11. At that time, the UNC also suggested making the meetings regular and establishing additional hot lines between the two sides in Panmunjom. "We expect a positive response from the North," a military official in Seoul said. In the meeting, Major General Michael V. Hayden, who has been appointed as director of the US National Security Agency, will bid farewell to the DPRK representatives, the official said. The meeting will be attended by Hayden, ROK Brigadier General Kum Ki-yon, British Brigadier General John G. Baker, and Australian Navy Captain John S. Moore. On the DPRK side of the table will be Major General Li Chan-bok, Brigadier General Cho Dong-hyon, and Colonel Park Im-soo. The generals' meeting started last June 23 amid a crisis triggered by a DPRK submarine incursion into the ROK.

5. DPRK Human Rights

Korea Herald ("NORTH KOREA REPUDIATES U.S. REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS," Seoul, 03/08/99) reported that the DPRK on Saturday refuted the US human rights reports for 1999, calling it a US attempt to apply its human rights standards on other countries. While answering questions from a reporter from the DPRK's Korean Central News Agency, a spokesman at the DPRK Foreign Ministry said that the annual US human rights report is but a "trite thing worked out by people with old-fashioned ways of thinking." The spokesman said that the US is the very "dead ground" of human rights, although the US proclaims that it is the global protector of human rights. "Therefore, the United States has no right to intervene in other countries' human rights affairs," he added. He then stressed that each country has its own tradition, culture and social history and therefore has different standards for and means of protecting human rights, saying, "Our people are fully enjoying economic, social and cultural rights and freedom." In the human rights report, the US State Department described the DPRK as a country "(where) open executions are still being made and abrupt disappearances reported, while refusing human rights itself under the absolute dictatorship of Kim Jong-il."

6. US Envoy's Visit to Mt. Kumgang

Korea Herald ("U.S. ENVOY MAY VISIT MOUNTAIN KUMGANG," Seoul, 03/08/99) reported that US Ambassador Stephen W. Bosworth may visit Mt. Kumgang in the DPRK on one of Hyundai's cruise ships in April at the earliest. The Seoul-based US embassy has recently hinted at the possibility of its ambassador visiting Mt. Kumgang to the group unofficially, a senior Hyundai official who requested anonymity said Sunday. Related to this, Hyundai will soon discuss the matter of foreigners visiting Mt. Kumgang with senior DPRK officials, he said. In bilateral negotiations on the Mt. Kumgang development project last November, the DPRK hinted that it might allow foreigners to visit the scenic mountain in May this year, but the date could be advanced to next month, he said. Bosworth would become the first high-ranking US government official to visit Mt. Kumgang if his visit were realized. Visits by the US ambassador and other foreign diplomats in the ROK to Mt. Kumgang would help in creating favorable relations on the Korean peninsula and speed up economic cooperation between the two countries, he said.

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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