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I. United States

1. US-ROK Summit

The Washington Post (Steven Mufson, "SEOUL'S KIM PRESSES FOR U.S. ROLE," 3/9/01, P. A22) the New York Times (David E. Sanger, "BUSH TELLS SEOUL TALKS WITH NORTH WON'T RESUME NOW," 3/8/01), and the Associated Press (Eun-Kyung Kim, "U.S. URGED TO RESUME N. KOREA

TALKS," Washington, 3/9/01) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-jung urged the US on Thursday to negotiate with the DPRK soon. Kim stated, "We must assist so that North Korea can continue on the path of change. We must help so that it does not return to its old ways.... I truly believe it is our responsibility and duty to seize this opportunity we have for peace." Kim also said, "South Korea-North Korea relations can advance only so far without progress in U.S.-North Korea relations. These two must move in parallel." Kim has made the case in the US over the past few days that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il is ready to settle differences with the US, attempting to overcome reservations held by many US officials over transparency and verifiability of agreements with the DPRK. US Senator Joseph R. Biden said, "I think Kim is correct that the window is narrow. I don't know whether what's on the other side of the window is worth it, but we sure should go and look."

2. US Policy Towards DPRK

The Washington Post (Steven Mufson, "SEOUL'S KIM PRESSES FOR U.S. ROLE," 3/9/01, P. A22), and the Associated Press ("POWELL MAY EXPAND N KOREAN AGENDA," 3/8/01; and Eun-Kyung Kim, "U.S. URGED TO RESUME N. KOREA TALKS," Washington, 3/9/01) reported that US Secretary of State Colin Powell, speaking before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, attempted to reconcile comments that US officials have made about the DPRK in the past few days. Powell spoke harshly of the DPRK regime, but also repeated his earlier remark that elements of former US President Bill Clinton's administration's negotiations toward a missile deal were "very promising." Powell also described the DPRK's troop deployments on the border as "probably as great a threat to South Korea and Seoul and regional stability as are weapons of mass destruction." Powell said he may try to enlarge the prospective missile negotiations to include US misgivings about the number of troops deployed to the border.

The Office of International Information Programs at the US Department of State (Susan Ellis, "POWELL SAYS BUSH ADMINISTRATION SUPPORTS 'AGREED FRAMEWORK' WITH NORTH KOREA," Washington, 3/8/01) reported that, when asked about contradictions from US officials in their statements about the US policy for the DPRK, US Secretary of State Colin Powell said that the Clinton administration had left a concrete "set of ideas with respect to reducing their missile production, their proliferation of this kind of system," but "what was missing in what had been done was how one would put in place any kind of monitoring or verification regime. Powell also said, "We are monitoring the Agreed Framework, and we've continued to support the 1994 Agreed framework."

3. Reactions to US Policy

The Washington Post (Steven Mufson, "BUSH CASTS A SHADOW ON KOREA MISSILE TALKS," 3/8/01) reported that Darryl Kimball, executive director of the Coalition to Reduce Nuclear Dangers, said, "It is disappointing and self-defeating for President Bush not to pursue the possibility of verifiable agreement to freeze North Korea's missile program, which would be a lot more efficient than a high-priced missile defense system."

The Office of International Information Programs at the US Department of State ("TEXT: SEN. BIDEN URGES U.S. ENGAGEMENT WITH N. KOREA ON MISSILES," Washington, 3/8/01) reported that US Senator Joseph Biden, the highest-ranking Democrat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said, "We should engage North Korea in a serious diplomatic effort... It is vital that we not drop the ball; miss an opportunity to end North Korea's deadly and destabilizing pursuit of long range missiles." He also discouraged the Bush administration from engaging in lengthy reviews of its DPRK policy.

4. US Editorials on Missile Deal

The Washington Post ("PUTTING KOREA ON HOLD," 3/9/01, P. A26) published an editorial which argued that the Bush administration has some good reasons for the diplomatic pause with the DPRK, including the difficulty it faces in verifying simple aspects of its previous agreements with the DPRK and that the warming of inter-Korean relations has not led to any change in DPRK military deployments along the border. However, the editorial argues, just as DPRK leader Kim Jong-il is seeming interested in opening the DPRK, engagement is offering the DPRK the chance to avert economic collapse, and the DPRK is holding open the possibility that the military standoffs could be peacefully defused, the Bush administration is sending a message that is mixed but harsh. The editorial concludes by arguing that there seems no reasonable alternative to continuing with the Clinton policy to explore, if more deliberately and cautiously, whether a halting of the DPRK's missile programs is feasible.

An editorial in the Los Angeles Times ("ASK MORE FROM N. KOREA," 3/9/01) argued that while statements by US officials over policy toward the DPRK have been contradictory, it is clear both that the Bush administration is still writing its DPRK policy and that such a policy is linked to Bush's eagerness to build a national missile shield. The editorial states that it is clear that Bush wants the DPRK to take concrete tension-reducing measures in exchange for the humanitarian and energy aid it gets from the US. The editorial argues that everyone's interests would be served if the DPRK becomes a more responsible participant in the international system and that the US is right to insist that the bilateral relationship requires mutual accommodations and greater openness.

5. Japanese View of Missile Deal

The Associate Press (Thomas Wagner, "U.S. QUESTIONED ON N. KOREA STANCE," Tokyo, 3/9/01) reported that a Japan Times editorial warned that "treating Pyongyang like an enemy will ensure that it becomes one." However, the editorial also said, "It would be hard to paint Mr. Bush as a hard-liner as he applauded the South Korean president's leadership and vision." Japanese analysts said, however, that holding the DPRK accountable is not likely to derail ROK reconciliation efforts. Li Xiguang, director of international communications at Qinghua University in Beijing, urged US President George W. Bush to continue former President Bill Clinton's policy. Li said, "It would be counterproductive to change the policy of engaging North Korea. If that changes, the North could react with hostility and become more confrontational and defensive."

6. Japanese Political Situation

The Associated Press (Eric Talmadge, "PAPERS: JAPAN'S MORI WILL RESIGN," Tokyo, 3/8/01) reported that Japanese dailies Yomiuri Shimbun and Nihon Keizai Shimbun said that Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori would announce his intention to resign Friday over concerns about the nation's poor financial recovery. Yasuo Fukuda, the Cabinet's chief spokesman, said, "We don't know where the information is coming from. I can't comment on such specious speculation." Mori survived a no-confidence motion earlier this week, the second in five months, and opposition party officials said Friday they are considering whether to submit a censure motion against him next week. The top contenders to replace Mori appeared to be former Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto, Foreign Minister Yohei Kono, former Health Minister Junichiro Koizumi, and Chikage Ogi, who heads the Conservative Party, the smallest of the three ruling coalition parties.

The Washington Post (Clay Chandler, "AS JAPAN'S ECONOMY SAGS, MANY FAVOR A COLLAPSE," 3/9/01) reported that Japanese Finance Minister Kiichi Miyazawa warned Thursday that the

Japanese government's public finances are near collapse. Aides to Miyazawa quickly stated that his comments were attempting to underscore the growing debate in Japan over government spending and that he was not predicting an imminent default. Despite government spending to pull the economy out of a recession, including bailout packages that pumped hundreds of billions of dollars into the economy over the past decade, analysts reported that the economy shrank in the July-September quarter and likely contracted in the October-December quarter also. Yasuhiko Shibata of the Yomiuri Research Institute, a respected research group, said, "Even if such a crisis does strike, it could provide an excellent opportunity to rebuild the economy."

7. Japanese Unit 731 Case

The Washington Post (Doug Struck, "CHINESE CONFRONT JAPAN IN COURT, GERM WARFARE VICTIMS TESTIFY," Tokyo, 3/9/01, P. A20) reported that four Chinese men testified in a Japanese court regarding germ warfare by Japan in World War II. They described how the bubonic plague had spread from village to village from 1940 to 1942, dropped by Japanese Imperial Army Unit 731. The men are plaintiffs in a lawsuit brought by 180 Chinese citizens alleging that crimes against humanity committed by the Unit 731 medical experimentation unit have gone unacknowledged and unpunished. Keiichiro Ichinose, a lawyer for the plaintiffs, said, "Almost 50 years after the war, the Japanese government has not admitted or apologized for the existence of Unit 731 or their experiments. The cruelty of what happened is equal to that of the Nazis. We'd like to put a light on that." Makato Ueda, a history professor at Rikkyo University in Tokyo, said, "Through this trial, this is the first time the whole grand picture of damage caused by Unit 731 has been revealed. The American and international press have covered it, but the Japanese press has not covered it much."

8. US Policy Towards Taiwan

The Los Angeles Times (Norman Kempster, "POWELL UPHOLDS SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL, TAIWAN," 3/8/01) reported that US Secretary of State Colin Powell said that the Bush administration will maintain the position that the US does not support Taiwanese independence but will help the island resist any attempt by the PRC to take it by force. He said, "Under no circumstance would we tolerate any change in the status of Taiwan unless it is the result of free and open negotiations between the parties." Powell also said that Taiwan deserves the benefits of membership in international organizations but should not be allowed to join those that are open only to sovereign states.

II. Republic of Korea

1. ROK-US Summit

The Korea Herald (Chon Shi-yong, "BUSH BACKS KIM'S NORTH KOREA APPROACH," Washington, 03/08/01) and Chosun Ilbo (Joo Yong-joong, "POWELL DENIES DIFFERING NK POLICIES," Washington, 03/07/01) reported that US President George W. Bush on Wednesday expressed support for ROK's reconciliatory approach toward the DPRK. Bush also pledged in summit talks with ROK President Kim Dae-jung that his government will closely consult with the ROK in dealing with the DPRK, including its missile and nuclear problems. ROK officials said that Bush stressed that the ROK should play the leading role in resolving the Korean issues. "The two leaders also reaffirmed that South Korea and the United States continue to maintain close three-way cooperation with Japan regarding North Korean affairs," said Kim Ha-joong, Kim's chief security adviser. Kim Ha-joong said that he believes that the agreement made by Presidents Kim and Bush was convincing enough to

dispel lingering doubts about differences in the DPRK policies of the ROK government and the new US government.

2. Inter-Korean Ministerial Meeting

The Korea Herald (Kim Ji-ho, "5TH INTER-KOREAN MINISTERIAL TALKS TO OPEN IN SEOUL," Seoul, 03/08/01) reported that the ROK and the DPRK will resume high-level talks in Seoul next Tuesday to discuss furthering inter-Korean rapprochement by, among others, fixing the date for DPRK leader Kim Jong-il's visit to Seoul, ROK officials said Wednesday. The four-day talks, the fifth of their kind since Kim and President Kim Dae- jung held a successful summit last June, will be led by Park Jae-kyu, ROK unification minister, and Jon Kum-jin, a senior councilor for the DPRK cabinet. In a telephone message sent through liaison offices at Panmunjom, Jon said that he had accepted Park's proposal last month for the details of their discussion. ROK officials said that the two sides would discuss scheduling trip to the ROK by the DPRK leader. "This time, however, we expect Jon will come with some proposals (on the trip)," said a senior ROK Unification Ministry official, requesting anonymity.

3. Alleged DPRK Drug Smuggling

The Korea Herald (Shin Yong-bae, "N. KOREA BLASTS U.S. DRUG SUSPICION," Seoul, 03/08/01) reported that a DPRK Foreign Ministry spokesman assailed the US for recently slandering his country over the "drug issue," the Korean Central News Agency reported Tuesday. The US State Department, in an annual report on drug control released March 1, hinted that the DPRK may be manufacturing and smuggling drugs into other countries and said it will "keep tabs on" the DPRK, while admitting there was a lack of clear evidence. "This is a groundless charge and shameless provocation against the DPRK," the spokesman was quoted as saying. He claimed that the use and transaction of drugs, to say nothing of their manufacturing, are strictly banned by law under the "man-centered socialist system in the DPRK where a sound way of life prevails." He added, "Shortly ago, it slandered the DPRK over 'human rights abuse' and this time it fabricated the preposterous 'drug issue' in a bid to tarnish the image of the DPRK and isolate it. However, no one will lend an ear to this. The US is well advised to clearly know that such a trite trick will only bring to light the futility of its hostile policy toward the DPRK."

4. ROK Minister to Visit DPRK

Chosun Ilbo (Jin Seong-ho, "MINISTER OF CULTURE TO VISIT PYONGYANG," Washington, 03/07/01) reported that ROK Minister of Culture and Tourism Kim Han-gill announced Wednesday that he will visit Pyongyang on March 10 at the invitation of Kim Yong-sun, chairman of the Asia Pacific Peace Committee, to discuss exchanges in culture, tourism and sports. Minister Kim said that he will seek agreements on regular meetings between culture ministers, increased tourism and a unified table tennis team for the Osaka World Championships. Kim denied that he was a presidential emissary smoothing the way for Kim Jong-il's visit to Seoul saying that he has no plans to meet the DPRK leader. He will be accompanied by a nine-member team on his trip.

III. Japan

1. DPRK Missile Development

The Daily Yomiuri (Yoshikazu Shirakawa, "N. KOREA DPLOYS 100 RODONS," Seoul, 03/03/2001) reported that, according to the ROK's Chosun Ilbo on March 3, the DPRK has produced and deployed about 100 Rodong missiles since 1998 and tested the Taepodong-2 missile engines three or four times. The report quoted an ROK governmental source as saying that the DPRK is building underground missile bases for Rodong and Taepodong with 3,500- to 6,000-kilometer ranges in Jakangdo and Hamkyongnamdo, respectively. It is believed that 60 to 80 percent of the construction work has been completed. The report added that the DPRK said in September 1999 that it would not launch any missiles during the ongoing missile talks with the US, but that the two countries have not yet reached an agreement on the DPRK's missile development or the suspension of missile exports from the country.

2. US Stance on DPRK Missile Deal

The Sankei Shimbun (Ryoichi Nisida, "WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO US-DPRK MISSILE TALKS?" Washington, 03/08/2001) reported that an unidentified high- ranking US official said on March 6 that the US-DPRK missile deal that the former Clinton administration had almost made with the DPRK is still on the table. The official said that the deal was proposed when former US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright visited Pyongyang last year and the deal includes the DPRK's freeze on the test, development, production and deployment of missiles with a target range of 500km or longer in exchange for the US launches of satellites, the limitation of satellites to non-military purposes and of the launch site to places outside the DPRK to keep the satellite technology from the DPRK, and the DPRK's stoppage of missile exports in exchange for food and coal aid. The report added that according to the official, the DPRK wants to resume the missile talks with the US as soon as possible, and the proposed deal could also prevent the DPRK from developing Rodong missiles with a target range of 500km that can hit Japan.

3. Japanese View of US-ROK Policy Toward DPRK

The Yomiuri Shimbun (Gaku Shibata, "JAPANESE DIPLOMATIC SOURCES ARE CONCERNED ABOUT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN US AND ROK IN DPRK POLICY," Washington, 03/07/2001) reported that a Washington-based Japanese diplomatic source said, "The divergence between the US and the ROK in policy toward the DPRK is not desirable to Japan.... The DPRK may drive a wedge between them and even provoke the Bush administration." The source also emphasized the need for earlier re-coordination of DPRK policy among the US, the ROK and Japan. A Japanese Foreign Ministry high-ranking official responsible for DPRK policy also said, "The Bush administration would shake the DPRK by giving priority to national missile defense and theater missile defense deployment over talks with the DPRK.

4. Light-Water Reactor Project

The Nihonkeizai Shimbun (Takahiro Hashimoto, "DPRK DEMANDS THAT US SOLVE ELECTRICITY PROBLEM," Seoul, 03/02/2001) reported that according to the DPRK Central New Agency on March 3, a DPRK Foreign Ministry spokesman criticized the US government for delaying the light-water reactor project and causing the DPRK a serious electricity shortage and demanded that the US compensate it for the loss. The DPRK spokesman stated, "The US should swiftly come up with a solution to compensate for the loss caused by its own responsibility.... We have the right to demand the US responsibility because we have been sincerely implementing the 1994 Agreed Framework."

5. Japanese Defense Agency Upgrade

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("MORI SEEKS PUBLIC SUPPORT ON DEFENSE AGENCY ISSUE," 03/06/2001) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori said at the House of Councilors Budget Committee on March 6 that the Japanese government should make "utmost efforts" to obtain the public's understanding on the proposed upgrading of the Japanese Defense Agency's status to Defense Ministry. Mori stated, "No major industrialized nation has a government body in charge of national defense called an 'agency.'" He also said that further discussions on the issue should be held both within the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and by party outsiders. The LDP's Policy Research Council has approved the outline of a bill to change the status of the agency to a ministry, while LDP Diet members in favor of the bill have formed a league to promote the change. However, some members of the LDP and ruling coalition partner New Komeito remain wary of the idea. On the issue of devising legislation to deal with national emergencies, Mori said, "It is a very important issue involving a number of government ministries and agencies, which would be subject to the legislation. Various issues need to be examined."

6. Japanese History Textbook

The Japan Times (Hisane Masaki, "JAPAN'S HISTORY AGAIN HAUNTS FUTURE RELATIONS," 03/09/2001) reported that the ongoing controversy between Japan and the ROK over the Japanese history textbook for junior high schools has taken a toll on the bilateral diplomatic calendar. The report quoted diplomatic sources as saying on March 8 that the row, as well as the increasing uncertainty over Japanese politics, have forced the two countries to postpone a regular ministerial meeting originally planned for later this month. The sources said that the annual meeting of Japanese and ROK ministers could be delayed until this summer or even later if the textbook controversy intensifies further -- and if the current Japanese political uncertainty drags on longer than expected. The textbook at the center of the dispute was authored by a group of nationalist historians, led by Kanji Nishio, a professor at the state- run University of Electro-Communications. It is now being screened at the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. The authors maintain that current history textbooks in Japan are biased against the country and full of self-denigration. Nishio's textbook provoked an uproar from Japan's Asian neighbors, especially the ROK and the PRC, which said the book distorts history and justifies Japan's wartime aggression in Asia. ROK President Kim Dae-jung recently urged Japan to have a "correct" understanding of its history, although he avoided a direct reference to the textbook issue. PRC President Jiang Zemin also said recently that Japan should pay "special consideration" to the new textbook and handle the issue "so as not to damage the friendship between two countries," indirectly calling on the Japanese government not to approve the controversial book. The report said that Kim Jong-pil, the former ROK prime minister, also warned Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori on March 8 that the textbook could mar Japan-ROK relations that are "looking good so far." Kim, who is acting as de-facto ROK special envoy to Japan to deal with the textbook issue, met with Mori at the Prime Minister's Official Residence to convey his country's concern. Kim told reporters after the 30-minute meeting that he avoided making concrete demands over the issue because he does not want to interfere in Japan's domestic affairs. Kim said, "I fully explained my views, and Prime Minister Mori did his. We both agreed that we are going to maintain a good bilateral relationship." According to a Foreign Ministry official, Kim proposed that both Japan and the ROK continue making efforts to ensure that the bilateral relationship not be damaged by the textbook row. Mori meanwhile explained that Japan has no state- designated school textbooks and the Education Ministry is now strictly screening the textbooks.

7. Prime Minister's Situation

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("PRIME MINISTER TO ANNOUNCE RESIGNATION ON MARCH 10,"

03/09/2001) reported that a high-ranking Liberal Democratic Party member told the Yomiuri Shimbun that Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori would announce his resignation on March 10. The report also said that the Cabinet would dissolved in mid April when the bills related to the 2001 budget pass the Diet, but suggested that the dissolution may not come as easy as expected given the complicated situation.

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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International Policy Studies Institute Seoul, Republic of Korea
Center for American Studies,
Fudan University, Shanghai, People's Republic of China
Monash Asia Institute,
Monash University, Clayton, Australia

Timothy L. Savage: napsnet@nautilus.org
Berkeley, California, United States

Gee Gee Wong: napsnet@nautilus.org
Berkeley, California, United States

Robert Brown: napsnet@nautilus.org
Berkeley, California, United States

Kim Hee-sun: khs688@hotmail.com
Seoul, Republic of Korea

Hiroyasu Akutsu: akutsu@glocomnet.or.jp
Tokyo, Japan

Peter Razvin: icipu@glas.apc.org
Moscow, Russian Federation

Yunxia Cao: yule111@sina.com
Shanghai, People's Republic of China

Dingli Shen: dlshen@fudan.ac.cn
Shanghai, People's Republic of China

John McKay: John.McKay@adm.monash.edu.au
Clayton, Australia

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Nautilus Institute
608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email: nautilus@nautilus.org