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I. United States

1. Hwang Assertions of DPRK War Threat

Reuters ("DEFECTOR: N. KOREA MOST LIKELY NUKE CAPABLE," Seoul, 5/9/97) reported that Kwon Young-hae, head of the ROK Agency for National Security Planning (NSP), told a parliamentary committee Friday that DPRK defector Hwang Jang-yop says he presumes the DPRK has nuclear weapons but cannot prove it. Hwang, the highest-ranked official ever to flee the DPRK, has told Seoul investigators he could provide no details about any nuclear capability because he did not have access to military secrets. "Mr. Hwang said he presumed North Korea possessed nuclear weapons as it withdrew from the NPT (Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty) in 1993 while refusing inspections of atomic sites by the IAEA," Kwon said. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the United Nations' nuclear watchdog, has never been able to confirm that the DPRK has a nuclear device, but said again in April that it had yet to account for an amount of nuclear-grade plutonium that experts say it possesses. A crisis over Pyongyang's suspected nuclear weapons program led to the landmark accord signed in Geneva in 1994, under which the DPRK agreed to dismantle its nuclear facilities in return for safer reactors promised by the United States. Upon arrival in the ROK on April 20, Hwang, the architect of the DPRK's guiding ideology of self-reliance or "juche," said

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I. United States

1. Hwang Assertions of DPRK War Threat

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1. Hwang Assertions of DPRK War Threat

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Reuters ("DEFECTOR: N. KOREA MOST LIKELY NUKE CAPABLE," Seoul, 5/9/97) also reported that Kwon Young-hae, head of the ROK Agency for National Security Planning (NSP), told a parliamentary committee Friday that DPRK defector Hwang Jang-yop told NSP investigators that the DPRK has focused efforts on preparing for a war since 1974, when Kim Il-sung's son Kim Jong-il began playing a leading political role in Pyongyang. Kwon quoted Hwang as saying that in the DPRK a "war atmosphere has dominated since December 1991 when he became the supreme commander (of the army)." Kim Jong-il drew up a war plan in 1992 to capture the ROK in a lightning three-day assault, but was prevented from executing the idea because Kim Il-sung opposed it, Kwon quoted Hwang as saying. "Mr. Hwang Jang-yop said the plan was shelved after Kim Il-sung said priority must be given to resolving economic problems," Kwon said. Kwon told the committee that Hwang said Kim Jong-il has made all major policy decisions alone since Kim Il-sung died in 1994, and that Hwang portrayed the younger Kim as still looking for an opportunity to strike against the South.

2. Hwang Assertions of DPRK War Threat Considered

The Gannett News Service (John Omicinski, "IS NORTH KOREA LIKELY TO INVADE THE SOUTH?," Washington, 5/9/97) reported that Asian experts are uncertain what credence to give to DPRK defector Hwang Jang-yop's assertions that the DPRK is poised for war, and frustrated because so far the ROK has refused to allow anyone else to question him further. James Lilley, former US ambassador to the ROK, was quoted as saying, "At this stage, you'd better take this guy very seriously. If you make the wrong assessment, there could be millions of people dead." However, Lilley also noted that the DPRK in the past has effectively used threats of war to throw the US off balance. "He's once again introduced the 'irrational factor,' which has proven to be a very effective tool for North Korea," Lilley said. "Because Americans are not very smart bargainers, the North Koreans have used the threat of war very skillfully. So far it's worked, worked, worked." Retired Rear Adm. Eugene Carroll, a military expert currently at the Center for Defense Information, said Hwang could be a plant. "You have to at least consider the idea," he said. "He's saying all the things that the North Koreans want us to believe -- how desperate they are. He is reinforcing their negotiating position by giving us the bleakest picture possible." However, Carroll added, whatever the veracity of Hwang's claims about DPRK intentions, the DPRK doesn't stand a chance if it fights the ROK without outside help. "They can do a lot of damage to Seoul, but they don't have the petroleum supplies for a sustained action," he said. [Ed. note: For a greater consideration of this last point, see "Future Korean War Scenarios Assessed" in the May 6 Daily Report.]

3. US Position on DPRK Food Aid

US State Department Spokesman Nicholas Burns ("STATE DEPT. NOON BRIEFING, MAY 8," USIA Transcript, 5/9/97) refuted media reports that, at the meeting of US, ROK, and Japanese officials in Tokyo May 7 to discuss policy toward the DPRK, the US and the ROK indicated that they would withhold substantial food aid from the DPRK unless it agrees to participate in Korean peninsula peace talks. Burns said that the US "did not indicate at that meeting a change in policy on this question of food aid," and that US policy remains that food aid is a humanitarian issue separate from

political concerns. "I can tell you the United States is not tying food assistance to North Korea to the hope that the North Koreans might join the four-party peace talks. ... We are not tying food aid in any way whatsoever," Burns said. However, in response to a question concerning the US position not to mount a large-scale, systematic effort to deal with the DPRK food crisis until the DPRK agrees to join peace talks, Burns said, I think you have asked a very good question, and you have probably drawn it the way it should be drawn. We do not favor the current economic system of North Korea, which is a communist system, which has clearly failed the people. President Clinton mentioned this a couple of weeks ago. We would like to see that system changed because it's that system that has failed the North Korean people and has led to the starvation and to the deprivation that millions of North Koreans are now experiencing. So are we going to put into North Korea billions of dollars of American, or Western, or Asian money -- either bilaterally or multilaterally to subsidize a communist economic system? No way. We're not going to do that. But that's not the question that we've been asked by the United Nation's World Food Program. The World Food Program came forward with a limited appeal. ... We have done, if you look at our US\$25 million contribution, the most of any country around the world, and I think the World Food Program is satisfied by the level of our assistance. So, we're going to respond on an emergency humanitarian basis to try to get food to people who need it in a failing system, but we are not going to spend billions of dollars of American money to prop up a decrepit, ancient, oxymoron, which is communist economics. There is the distinction that I think we can all draw for you."

4. US-DPRK Missile Talks Status

US State Department Spokesman Nicholas Burns ("STATE DEPT. NOON BRIEFING, MAY 8," USIA Transcript, 5/9/97) stated that the US has proposed to the DPRK new dates for US-DPRK missile talks following DPRK cancellation of talks scheduled for May 12-13 due to "technical reasons." Burns said the US is awaiting a DPRK reply to the proposed new dates for the meeting. Asked to gauge the seriousness of the DPRK reasons for postponing the meeting, Burns commented, "I can't explain that. Perhaps the North Koreans or someone else could explain what technical reasons are. ... The North Koreans are sometimes, perhaps most of the time, opaque. So rather than try to give you a detailed answer as to why they've chosen to postpone these talks, I think you should refer ... to my counterpart, the North Korean Foreign Ministry Spokesman in Pyongyang, and ask him what technical reasons are." Burns later added that, in contrast, "you never can say that the United States is opaque; we're transparent. We're very transparent people and government. We believe in transparency." Burns characterized his assessment of the prospects for future meetings as no gloomier than that given by Acting State Department Spokesman John Dinger in previous briefings. "We hope, as John said, that the North Koreans will agree to the resumption of the talks, to specific dates, and they will show up for the talks. But I can't tell you the talks have been rescheduled until the North Koreans agree to that."

The AP Dow Jones News Services ("N. KOREA CONFIRMS U.S. DESERTER JENKINS ALIVE AND WELL," Washington, 5/9/97) reported that the DPRK for the first time confirmed that Charles Robert Jenkins, a US soldier who deserted his Army post in the ROK in 1965, is living in the communist country. Pat Harrell of Roanoke Rapids, N.C., Jenkins' sister, said that, in a private meeting Wednesday in New York, DPRK government officials assured her that her brother is in good health. "I have to believe them. Yes, I believe them," Harrell said. She added that she was told that he has a North Korean wife and is a citizen of that country. "They said he has children at the university there," she said in a telephone interview Thursday. Harrell said she asked permission to visit her brother and was told that would depend on the outcome of US-DPRK talks on establishing diplomatic relations. The US Defense Department disclosed in January 1996 that it believed four soldiers were living in the DPRK, but the DPRK government had not confirmed it until now. An internal Defense Department report made public last year said a DPRK defector reported having met Jenkins in a

coffee shop in the capital, Pyongyang, and that Jenkins said "he is now ready to return to America." The report did not say when the encounter took place.

5. First US Ambassador to Vietnam Arrives

The Associated Press ("EX-POW IS NOW AMBASSADOR TO VIETNAM," Hanoi, 5/9/97) reported that on Friday Pete Peterson, a former prisoner of war in Vietnam and a former US Congressman, arrived in Hanoi to become the first US ambassador to postwar, communist Vietnam. "This is a special day for America and Vietnam," he said. "This is the beginning of a new era of constructive relations." Peterson was greeted by about a hundred well-wishers from Vietnam and the United States, including war veterans and business leaders. "The war belongs in the past," said former North Vietnam militiaman Mai Van On, who met Peterson with a bear hug and a warm smile. On, 79, was the man who rescued US Senator John McCain (R-Ariz.) in 1967 after he was shot down over Hanoi and plunged into a lake. Peterson said he hopes to help build on a budding new relationship between the one-time enemies, following the years of postwar animosity. Peterson added that the search for US servicemen still missing from the war tops the list of US interests in Vietnam. "Our highest national priority is to advance the fullest possible accounting for persons missing from the war," Peterson said. Peterson's arrival "affirms that both countries are interested in closing the chapter on the past in order to look toward the future," Prime Minister Vo Van Kiet recently told reporters. In the past, Kiet has criticized Washington for failing to move forward on trade and economic ties. Peterson's arrival completes the long, slow process of diplomatic normalization and may speed economic engagement. President Clinton in 1994 lifted a decades-old trade embargo on Hanoi, and established diplomatic ties the following year. US business representatives here and the Hanoi government hope the coming months will bring a trade pact and most-favored-nation trade status.

II. Republic of Korea

1. Japanese Position on Food Aid to DPRK

Japan Wednesday reaffirmed its reluctance to join the ROK and the US in providing humanitarian food aid to the famine-hit DPRK. The reluctance, blamed on the alleged kidnappings of Japanese by DPRK agents, was expressed here at a one-day meeting of sub-cabinet level officials from Tokyo and Washington, Japanese officials said. Taku Yamasaki, who heads the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) policy affairs council, was quoted by party officials as telling the US delegate to the meeting, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Charles Kartman, that Japan was "in a very difficult political situation" over food aid. "There is a growing public opinion that Japan should not extend food assistance unless the truth of past abduction cases was brought to light," Kartman. On Thursday, the Tokyo government officially categorized the case of a 13-year-old girl who went missing two decades ago as a suspected kidnapping by DPRK agents. The decision raises the number of suspected DPRK kidnappings in the 1970s and 1980s to seven involving 10 Japanese nationals. The DPRK has denied involvement in any of the kidnappings, calling the allegations a smear campaign orchestrated by the ROK's intelligence agency. Kartman, charged with East Asian and Pacific affairs, told Yamasaki that the food crisis, if unabated, would put the DPRK in a "critical situation" in late June and starve thousands of people to death, the officials said. The meeting also focused on the proposed four-party peace talks. Kartman and Yu said their countries would continue to encourage the DPRK to take part in exploratory contacts to prepare for the four-party talks, the officials said. They also stressed that massive food aid would be conditional on progress in the peace process. The meeting was a follow-up to high-level talks held by the three countries on March 3 in New York. (Korea Times, "JAPAN REMAINS RELUCTANT TO GIVE FOOD AID TO FAMINE-HIT NORTH," 05/09/97)

2. UN Food Aid to DPRK

Some 13,500 tons of corn and other foodstuffs arrived in the DPRK Wednesday as part of US government food aid to the starving famine-hit Stalinist state, the Japan Broadcasting Corp. (NHK) reported. The cargo, the first batch of UN-organized additional food aid to the DPRK, arrived at Nampo port on the DPRK's west coast early Wednesday. Quoting the Pyongyang office of the World Food Program (WFP), NHK said four more freighters were due to arrive in the DPRK by early June with the additional food aid totaling 70,000 tons. The resident WFP director in the DPRK, Birgitte Kalgren, said last week that 70,000 tons of food did not come close to addressing shortages. Last month the WFP estimated the DPRK's needs at one million tons, and called for a new package of international food aid worth US\$96 million. However, the UN food aid agency said recently that by the end of April only 40 percent of the target had been met. The PRC announced on April 13 it had offered its starving neighbor 70,000 tons of additional food aid. Kalgren added that although the country was suffering food shortages real famine had not arrived yet. "The WFP has all along said that famine is in the making unless more food aid is brought in," she said. (Korea Times, "ADDITIONAL US FOOD AID ARRIVES IN N.KOREA:REPORT," 05/09/97)

3. ROK Food Aid to DPRK

The ROK government is willing to offer the amount of grain aid desired by the DPRK as long as it agrees on direct relief delivery channels, including a ground route that would go through the truce village of Panmunjom, a senior government official said yesterday on the condition of anonymity. However, the official refused to reveal how much the DPRK asked for in the recent Red Cross talks in Beijing. He said that the ROK Red Cross delegate made no pledge because Seoul decided to deal with the Red Cross dialogue in a cautious manner. Seoul also views Pyongyang's position in the Beijing talks, that it would discuss the Panmunjom route and other procedural matters only after the ROK first specifies the size of its aid package, as not wholly unacceptable, the official said. In Beijing, ROK Red Cross officials said that Seoul will be able to increase the size of its relief package if inter-Korean direct delivery routes are established. Currently, the ROK National Red Cross, which has accepted donations from civilians and civic organizations, is moving to raise funds from major economic organizations here. Next Monday, the Red Cross society, designated by the government as the sole aid delivery channel to the DPRK, plans to offer a briefing on the outcome of the Red Cross talks to 30 major economic and private organizations at its conference room. However, a Red Cross spokesman said that it has no plan to divert 3.4 billion won, set aside for ROK disaster relief, to help the DPRK. So far, the ROK Red Cross society has sent 18 aid packages, worth 3.5 billion won, to the DPRK. In addition, it plans to transport 15,000 tons of corn to the DPRK city of Shinuiju. DPRK and ROK Red Cross officials are expected to resume talks in the near future to narrow their differences over provision of more aid. A spokesman for the DPRK Red Cross society said Tuesday that the ROK will have to specify the "sorts, size and delivery timetable" of aid in advance, and hand over the aid without any preconditions. However, the ROK is determined not to make an advance numerical commitment. (Korea Times, "SEOUL WILLING TO OFFER AID DESIRED BY NK IF DELIVERY MADE THRU PANMUNJOM," 05/09/97)

4. US Spy in ROK

A former US Navy intelligence analyst accused of spying for the ROK pleaded guilty to a lesser charge Wednesday. Robert C. Kim, 57, admitted to a single charge of conspiracy to commit espionage in federal court, telling Judge Leonie M. Brinkema that he passed US Defense Department and State Department secret documents to a representative of the ROK government. As part of a plea agreement Brinkema dismissed a previous indictment charging him with three counts of giving defense information to a foreign government, crimes that carry a maximum sentence of life imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine. Brinkema scheduled sentencing for July 11. In agreeing to plead guilty to a less serious charge, Kim contended he passed classified and confidential documents to the ROK to help

his native country, not to hurt the US government, said Kim's attorney, Jamie Gore. As a civilian employee with the Office of Naval Intelligence, Kim had access to classified maritime information in the joint Navy-Coast Guard computer system. Prosecutors said that over a nine-month period, Kim gave the ROK military information about the PRC and the DPRK. However, authorities have said they have no evidence that Kim accepted any money for the information. (Korea Times, "FORMER US NAVY ANALYST PLEADS TO LESSER SPY CHARGES," 05/09/97)

5. UN Action Against DPRK Chemical Weapons

The ROK is seeking to generate UN-level disciplinary measures, including trade sanctions, against the DPRK and other non-signatory states of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), if they keep refusing to join it. In an initial step to woo international support, ROK Vice Foreign Minister Lee Ki-choo called on the international community to make "concerted efforts" to press non-signatory states -- and in particular, those suspected of possessing chemical weapons -- to sign and ratify the convention. "Bringing North Korea into the CWC regime is certain to contribute to the promotion of peace and security not only on the Korean peninsula but also in Asia and the Pacific. Once again, we strongly urge North Korea to join this regime without delay," the vice foreign minister said. He assessed the DPRK's continued refusal to join the CWC as a "serious security concern for our own country." Lee made the remarks in a keynote speech to the first conference session of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), held in The Hague on Wednesday. In another keynote speech Tuesday, US representative Ralph Earle, deputy director of the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA), also called on the DPRK and the non-signatory states to join the CWC regime. According to Jane's Intelligence Review and other sources, the DPRK is believed to have stockpiled 1,000 to 5,000 tons of chemical weapons, with the majority of these weapons comprised of mustard, sarin and other toxic gases. The ROK joined the CWC on April 28 in spite of domestic resistance based in the criticism that joining is premature so long as the DPRK holds a large arsenal of chemical weapons, ready to attack the ROK. (Korea Times, "SEOUL SEEKS TO INTRODUCE UN ACTION AGAINST NK CHEMICAL WEAPONS," 05/09/97)

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We invite you to reply to today's report, and we welcome commentary or papers for distribution to the network.

Produced by [the Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainable Development](#).

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