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I. United States

1. UN DPRK Talks

The Washington Post (Colum Lynch, "UN COUNCIL STALLED ON NORTH KOREA US, ALLIES SUSPEND PUSH FOR CRITICISM OF NUCLEAR EFFORTS," UN," 04/10/04) reported that the U.N. Security Council failed to reach agreement today on a common approach to confronting the DPRK for its plans to reactivate an atomic energy program capable of producing nuclear bombs. Facing stiff PRC and Russian opposition to U.N. action, the US, France and Britain temporarily ended their efforts to persuade the 15-nation council to adopt a statement criticizing North Korea. The US ambassador to the United Nations, John D. Negroponte, said the Bush administration would continue diplomatic efforts to restrain the DPRK's nuclear ambitions. But he sharply criticized the DPRK leadership for engaging the world in a game of deadly nuclear brinksmanship. "North Korea's behavior has cast a shadow over the Korean Peninsula and is of concern to the entire international community," Negroponte said after the council met to discuss the issue. He said the DPRK's actions "threaten the stability of northeast Asia." State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said the US is working with regional powers, including the PRC, ROK, and Japan, to start multilateral talks on the future of the DPRK's nuclear program. He said that any deal with the government in Pyongyang would require "verifiable" assurances that it has eliminated its nuclear weapons program. The Bush administration had hoped to rally the council around a tough statement urging Pyongyang to reconsider by today's deadline. "North Korea has violated its obligations," Boucher said. "We do believe the council should act to go on record opposing North Korea's nuclear actions and warning against further provocation."

2. US on DPRK Nuclear Issue

The Washington File (Judy Alta, "US WANTS PEACEFUL SOLUTION FOR DPRK NUCLEAR ISSUE," UN, 04/10/03) reported that the US April 9 urged the DPRK to accept diplomatic efforts to address its nuclear program and emphasized that Washington seeks "a peaceful resolution so that the DPRK can come into compliance with its international obligations." Speaking with journalists after a closed-door Security Council meeting, US Ambassador John Negroponte said the US welcomed the council's discussion. "North Korea's recent actions -- announcing its intention to withdraw from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), restarting its reactor, and preparing for reprocessing -- all threaten the stability of northeast Asia. It's not just a matter of getting the North to give up its nuclear weapons ambitions. North Korea must also accept a reliable verification regime," said Negroponte, the chief US envoy to the United Nations.

3. PRC-Russia UN Statement Obstruction

The New York Times (Felicity Barringer, "SECURITY COUNCIL AVERTS STANDOFF ON NORTH KOREA NUCLEAR ISSUE," UN, 04/10/03) and Agence France-Presse ("CHINA, RUSSIA BLOCK UN CONDEMNATION OF NORTH KOREA," Seoul, 04/10/03) reported that the PRC and Russia blocked UN condemnation of the DPRK as the DPRK was set to become the first country to withdraw from the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. North Korea served notice three months ago that it was pulling out of the international arms control accord that has served as a gatekeeper to nuclear weapons proliferation for more than three decades. In New York on Wednesday, the UN Security Council expressed concern at a closed-door meeting but failed to agree on a statement condemning the Stalinist state's nuclear weapons drive. The PRC, a key supplier of aid and trade, and Russia, with significant economic interests in North East Asia, have argued that UN intervention could deepen the six-month-old standoff. They have urged the US to engage in direct talks with the Stalinist regime to break the impasse. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan said he was unable to predict what action, if any, the Security Council might take in the future. "I think the next step is really to get the

parties talking and to find a format that will be acceptable to both parties and bring them to the table to talk," Annan said.

4. Russia on DPRK Guarantee

Agence France-Presse ("RUSSIAN DEFENSE CHIEF URGES NORTH KOREA TO ALLOW UN INSPECTORS," Seoul, 04/10/03) and BBC News ("RUSSIA BACKS NORTH KOREA GUARANTEE," 04/10/03) reported that Russia's defence minister has said that the DPRK should be given a guarantee of its security as a way to resolve a nuclear standoff with the US. Sergei Ivanov, who is in Seoul for talks on the Korean nuclear crisis, said the DPRK should allow UN inspectors back into the country, but that the DPRK's confidence needed to be gained first. Ivanov's comments followed a UN Security Council meeting on Wednesday, at which Russia and the PRC blocked a statement to condemn the DPRK for pulling out of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). The PRC and Russia appeared to be concerned that UN involvement would only send the DPRK deeper into isolation. Ivanov said that talks with North Korea were needed to persuade Pyongyang to re-enter the NPT and allow inspectors back. "Of course this can be achieved only when Pyongyang receives full and absolute guarantees to the preservation of its territorial integrity, independence as well as absence of any aggressive schemes against it," he said. Correspondents say the DPRK is worried it could be the US's next military target after Iraq. The DPRK has called for the US to declare a non-aggression pact, but the US has maintained that the DPRK must first renounce its nuclear program. The UN envoy to the DPRK, Maurice Strong, said last week that the US was prepared to give the DPRK some kind of guarantee, but "the form of that response is not yet clear." The DPRK, he said, wants more than just a general statement.

5. Japan on DPRK NPT Withdrawal

The Japan Times (Kanako Takahara, "JAPAN SHUNS TALK OF PYONGYANG LEAVING NPT," 04/10/03) reported that as a three-month waiting period the DPRK had to observe to officially withdraw from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty ended Thursday, Japan refused to acknowledge the validity of its neighbor's actions. But it was also trying to walk a fine line and keep from provoking a government that boasts of its nuclear ambitions. "We do not think there is an international consensus that (North Korea) left the treaty," Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda said. Under the provisions of the NPT, signatory nations wishing to leave the pact are required to notify the U.N. Security Council and all the other signatories of their intention three months in advance. The DPRK says it left the NPT Jan. 10 immediately after announcing its withdrawal. But some countries say the DPRK has not notified the other signatories, as required, and thus has not officially withdrawn. Senior Vice Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi put Japan squarely in this camp during a news conference Thursday. "Japan has doubts over the validity of North Korea's withdrawal," he said. But political leaders both in Japan and around the world appear at a loss over what to do next. A senior Foreign Ministry official said nothing will change after Thursday, an apparent attempt to keep the legal debate over its withdrawal from further stoking the DPRK.

6. DPRK Military

The Associated Press (Christopher Torchia, "NORTH KOREA: STRONG MILITARY DETERS US," Seoul, 04/10/03) reported that the DPRK said the Iraq war proved the need for it to maintain a strong military deterrent against the US, as the DPRK's withdrawal from the global nuclear arms control treaty officially took effect Thursday. The DPRK's comments came a day after U.N. Security Council members said they were worried by the DPRK's standoff with the US, but refused to

condemn it for pulling out of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. The PRC and Russia had opposed condemning the DPRK. Drawing parallels with the US showdown with Iraq, the DPRK said that bowing to demands to abandon its suspected nuclear weapons development would lead to inspections and disarmament, setting the stage for a US invasion. "The Iraqi war launched by the US pre-emptive attack clearly proves that a war can be prevented and the security of the country and the nation can be ensured only when one has physical deterrent force," said KCNA. It did not specifically refer to nuclear weapons as a deterrent. The withdrawal from the nuclear arms control treaty officially took effect Thursday, three months after the DPRK announced it was pulling out.

7. ROK US Army Relocation

The New York Times (James Brooke, "US TO MOVE ITS ARMY HEADQUARTERS IN SOUTH KOREA OUT OF SEOUL," Seoul, 04/10/03) reported that US and ROK negotiators agreed today to move the US Army command headquarters out of Seoul as soon as possible. A magnet for anti-American demonstrations, the one-square-mile base, which supports 23,000 people, is within range of DPRK artillery cannons about 40 miles north of here, along the demilitarized zone. The headquarters is expected to be moved to the southern part of the country, possibly by expanding an existing US base. US negotiators hinted that talks next month would focus on shifting southward a 16,000-soldier US division now posted in the border area with the DPRK. US conservatives argue that the presence of so many US soldiers and their dependents within artillery range of the DPRK ties the hands of policy makers who want to keep open the option of bombing the DPRK's nuclear facilities. "There is going to be a realignment," Richard Lawless, deputy assistant secretary of defense for Asian-Pacific affairs, said when asked at a news conference today about the future position of the Second Infantry Division, the most forward based troops of the 37,000 American soldiers in the ROK. The possibility of moving all or most of the division is to be discussed when Lawless returns here next month for a second round of negotiations. Any troop movements are also to be discussed when the ROK's new president, Roh Moo Hyun, meets with President Bush in Washington on May 14, part of a five-day trip to the US. It will be the first trip to the US for Roh.

8. PRC-US Counter-Intelligence

The Washington Post (Dan Eggen and Kimberly Edds, "EX-FBI AGENT, LONGTIME 'ASSET' ARRESTED IN SPY CASE PROSECUTORS SAY HE ALLOWED WOMAN ACCESS TO CLASSIFIED INFORMATION THAT SHE SENT TO CHINA," 04/10/03) reported a top FBI counterintelligence agent gave a suspected PRC spy access to voluminous amounts of classified information during an alleged 20-year affair between the two, according to documents unsealed in US District Court in Los Angeles yesterday. James J. "J.J." Smith, 59, and Katrina M. Leung were arrested yesterday and charged with espionage-related offenses as the latest in a series of spy scandals rocked the FBI with allegations of betrayal, sexual intrigue and political connections. Federal prosecutors alleged that Leung, 49, a bookstore owner and well-known contributor to the Republican Party, acted as a "double agent" during her long-running sexual affair with Smith, 59, a senior FBI counterintelligence agent who had recruited her to spy on the People's Republic of China and was acting as her FBI contact. Smith retired in 2000, after 30 years with the FBI. The two were arrested at their homes yesterday morning in connection with the alleged theft and transfer of a single classified national defense document to the PRC government. Authorities said additional charges may follow. According to an FBI affidavit, "Smith routinely debriefed Leung at her residence and on occasion took classified documents there and left them unattended. Leung surreptitiously photocopied some of them, and documents she obtained in this manner have been recovered from her residence." The FBI paid Leung, code-named "Parlor Maid," $1.7 million over 20 years to provide the US government with information about the PRC, sources said.

9. PRC SARS Data

The New York Times (Elisabeth Rosenthal, "BEIJING DOCTOR QUESTIONS DATA ON ILLNESS," Beijing, 04/10/03) and the Washington Post (John Pomfret, "DOCTOR SAYS HEALTH MINISTRY LIED ABOUT DISEASE CHINESE MILITARY PHYSICIAN ACCUSES BEIJING OF HIDING EXTENT OF OUTBREAK TO PROMOTE TOURISM," Beijing, 04/10/03) reported that a senior retired military physician said that the PRC's health ministry was lying about the number of people hospitalized in Beijing with severe acute respiratory syndrome, noting that the number in military hospitals alone could be "up to 100." In a statement released to news organizations and in a subsequent interview, Dr. Jiang Yanyong said he "couldn't believe what I was hearing" as he watched the minister announce last Thursday that there had been only 12 cases and 3 deaths in Beijing. He said doctors at the military hospitals were "furious" about the statement, noting that on that day the military hospital designated to treat SARS cases, the People's Liberation Army No. 309 Hospital, already had 60 patients and 7 deaths from the disease. "As a doctor who cares about people's lives and health, I have a responsibility to aid international and local efforts to prevent the spread of the disease," Dr. Jiang wrote in his statement. Another doctor in the PRC health system, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said there were also dozens of patients at Youan Hospital, a nonmilitary hospital in Beijing that has been designated as a referral center for the disease, known by its initials as SARS.

10. Japan on Iraq Reconstruction

The Japan Times (Junko Takahashi, "JAPAN TO MAKE 'RESPONSIBLE CONTRIBUTION' TO REBUILDING IRAQ," 04/10/03) reported that Japan will make a "responsible contribution" to the reconstruction of postwar Iraq, Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda said Thursday, responding to the effective collapse of President Saddam Hussein's regime the previous day. However, the government apparently has not reached a consensus on the extent of Japan's involvement, awaiting news of the United Nations' role in rebuilding the war-torn country. Government leaders meanwhile expressed relief that the war seems to be nearing an end. "By watching the vivid scene of (Hussein's statute pulled down in Baghdad), we believe that the war has come to a final stage," Fukuda said. "However, the fighting is still sporadically continuing, and we hope that the war will be over as soon as possible without any more casualties." "It's good that we can now expect an end in the short term," Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi said. But the prime minister maintained that the war is not yet over, noting that Hussein's whereabouts remain unknown. Fukuda said finance ministers and central bankers from the Group of Seven major nations may "broadly" discuss the reconstruction of Iraq during their two-day meeting in Washington that begins Friday. "Japan will make a responsible contribution (to the reconstruction) as the second-biggest economy in the world," Fukuda said. Japan hopes to have a visible presence in Iraq's reconstruction process. But for that to happen, the government believes the U.N. must play a central role. Officials said Japan's role will be limited if post-Hussein Iraq comes under a US-led military occupation, which would clash with the nation's war-renouncing Constitution. Washington apparently wants to limit the U.N.'s role to humanitarian aid, while taking the lead in establishing an interim authority that will be run by US-friendly Iraqi exiles.

11. PRC on Iraq Reconstruction

CNN News (Willy Wo-Lap Lam, "CHINA PUSHES FOR POST-WAR ROLE," Hong Kong, 04/10/03) reported that the PRC has indicated it will try its best to safeguard China's economic interests in Iraq's post-war reconstruction. Wu Chunhua, Head of the PRC Foreign Ministry's Department of West Asian and North African Affairs, said the PRC wished to "enthusiastically" take part in the reconstruction of Iraq. The official China News Service on Thursday quoted Wu as saying "we shall

try our best to fight for and safeguard the PRC's interests in Iraq's post-war reconstruction." Wu disclosed the Iraqi government still owed the PRC "a few hundreds of millions of dollars" in debts and other unpaid bills. He said the Foreign Ministry had already taken steps to protect the PRC's "rights and interests" in the war-torn country. PRC officials have the past week reiterated the United Nations -- not the US or U.K. -- should play a central role in Iraq's post-war administration and reconstruction. However, in line with its generally low-profile stance on US military action in Iraq, the PRC has not taken as strong a stand as fellow permanent members of the United Nations Security Council such as France and Russia.

12. ROK-US Presidential Meeting

The Washington File ("TEXT: BUSH TO MEET SOUTH KOREAN PRESIDENT ROH AT WHITE HOUSE MAY 14," Washington, 04/10/03) reported that US President Bush will meet with President Roh Moo-hyun of the Republic of Korea on May 14, 2003. The President looks forward to welcoming President Roh to the White House to reaffirm the enduring strengths of our 50-year alliance with the Republic of Korea and to discuss how our two nations can cooperate as full partners to bring about a peaceful resolution of the DPRK nuclear issue, the reinforcement and development of the US-ROK alliance, and the promotion of bilateral economic ties.

http://usinfo.state.gov/cgi-bin/washfile/display.pl?p=/products/washfile/geog/ea&f=03040902.eea&t=/products/washfile/newsitem.shtml

13. Japan Nuclear Response Bill

The Japan Times ("NUCLEAR ATTACK RESPONSE BILL DRAFTED," 04/10/03) reported that the government has drafted a bill stipulating how it should respond to an attack involving nuclear, biological or chemical weapons. The bill states that the government is responsible for combating contamination if the country comes under attack with biological or chemical weapons. This is the first such mention in proposed legislation. Officials said the government will present the bill as early as next week to a special committee in the House of Representatives that has been scrutinizing legislation on how Japan should respond to a military attack. The outline stipulates that the government would have a major role in protecting and rescuing civilians in the event of an attack. According to other measures in the outline, the government would take enforcement measures if civilians do not obey official orders to contribute their supplies or allow the use of their properties. The national government would use its budget to cover all expenditures paid by local governments in protecting Japanese nationals, the outline says. The government would provide compensation if people die or sustain injuries in the course of helping relief activities, it says. The bill also calls for collaboration between local governments and the Self-Defense Forces in the event of a crisis by allowing SDF officers to take part in meetings at local government emergency headquarters.

14. ASEAN on DPRK Nukes

ABS-CBN (Estrella Torres, "ASEAN FORUM VENUE FOR EASING TALKS ON DPRK NUKES," 04/10/03) reported that the 10-member Association of the Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) have agreed to help mediate between the US and the DPRK to resolve the issue of the DPRK's revival of its nuclear programs. The 7th ASEAN-Republic of Korea (ROK) dialogue held in Makati April 8 and 9 agreed to have representatives of the US and the DPRK participate in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) meeting scheduled early May this year. Lauro Baja Jr., senior foreign affairs undersecretary for policy, said, "There are now representatives of both US and the North Korea who will attend the

ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) meeting early in May." A representative of the Republic of Korea, who requested not to be named, said, "Yes, we welcome the support of the ASEAN members for the peace and prosperity program of our government." During a break at the closed-door meeting in Makati's Shangri-La Hotel Tuesday said, the delegate also said, "We discussed it this morning (referring to the nuclear programs of the North Korea). But I can't talk about the details because its very sensitive and highly politicized." Baja said, "We (referring to ASEAN members) are also supporting what strategies and vision that the Republic of Korea has in resolving the tensions in North Korea." The meeting to be concluded today aims to review the ASEAN-ROK dialogue relations and recent regional and international developments as well as political and security issues.

15. ROK Domestic Economy

The New York Times (Don Kirk, "SOUTH KOREAN BANKER WARNS OF MORE SCANDALS," Seoul, 04/10/03) reported that the head of the ROK's largest bank warned today that the market-rocking scandal at the SK Group, one of the conglomerates that dominate the ROK economy, may not be the last. "There could be more problems left with Korean conglomerates," said Kim Jung Tae, president of Kookmin Bank. Kim won a reputation as one of Korea's shrewdest bankers when he rejected pleas for a bailout by several companies in the Daewoo conglomerate before the group collapsed in 1999. He said today that his bank cut its exposure to the chaebol, as the big conglomerates are known, by some two trillion won ($1.6 billion), including 200 billion won to SK Global. "Looking back, we could have done more," Kim said. Kim's remarks reflected widespread suspicions that what went on at SK Global - accounting irregularities that covered up $1.2 billion in losses at SK's trading arm in 2001 and accusations of sweetheart deals between the company and senior executives - was not isolated there but was typical of the way the chaebol continue to operate. The banking sector has often been battered by problems at the chaebol, and the present situation is no exception.

II. Republic of Korea

1. ROK President Visit to US in May

Joongang Ilbo ("ROH VISITS U.S. MID-MAY FOR TALKS ON N.K," Seoul, 04/09/03) reported that president Roh Moo-hyun will visit US May 11-17 for summit talks with US President George W. Bush on DPRK's nuclear issue and relations between ROK and US, Cheong Wa Dae announced Wednesday. It will be Roh's first-ever trip to US. Since taking office February 25, 2003. Roh's seven-day trip to US comes at a time when concerns are rising in ROK that DPRK may be the next target of US which is waging a war in Iraq. The two leaders have reaffirmed their commitment to resolving the nuclear standoff with DPRK through diplomacy. "We expect the summit will help strengthen alliance between the two countries, resolve the North's nuclear issue and defuse concerns among foreign investors about our economy," said presidential spokeswoman Song Kyoung-hee. During the summit talks slated for May 14, Roh and Bush will discuss a broad range of issues including the North's nuclear issue, economic cooperation between their two countries and the war in Iraq, said Roh's foreign policy adviser Ban Ki-moon. On his way to Washington, Roh will visit New York May 11-13, where he plans to meet leading Wall Street executives and offers interviews to major U.S. news media. He will also visit San Francisco May 15 on his way home.

2. ROK-US Military Talks

Joongang Ilbo (Lee Chul-hee, "ALLIES SPAR ON PROPOSAL TO RELOCATE US TROOPS," Seoul,

04/09/03) reported that mid-level defense officials from ROK and US have reportedly agreed again in principle to move the Yongsan Garrison, the headquarters for US troops, out of the Seoul area. The two sides differed, however, on a US proposal to pull back its combat infantry division from front-line positions north of Seoul. Richard Lawless, US deputy assistant secretary of defense for East Asian policy, and Lieutenant General Cha Young-koo, assistant minister of defense for policy, led their respective delegations at the talks. ROK government sources said US wants to move the 2d Infantry Division south of the Han River; ROK side asked that such a move be postponed until after the resolution of the DPRK nuclear arms issues. Another agenda item was a proposal to end the current agreement that US military leaders will assume operational command of Korean forces in wartime, but the discussion stayed, sources said, on a theoretical plane.

3. 3 North Koreans Repatriated

Chosun Ilbo (Choi Heup, "REFUGEES SENT BACK TO NORTH," Tokyo, 04/09/03) reported that thirty North Koreans who in late January were part of a group of refugees who attempted to escape to ROK or Japan via PRC's Yantai Harbor by boat were caught and repatriated to DPRK, a Japanese daily reported. Three South Koreans, members of nongovernmental organizations, were also apprehended for aiding the would-be defectors. The Japanese daily said that the NGOs involved would protest PRC's action at the United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees. The defectors prepared two escape boats on January 18 but were captured by Chinese police, and sent back to DPRK between Jan. 25 and Jan. 30. The incident was publicized when a defector who avoided repatriation sent a letter to a Japanese NGO.

4. Opposition to Reduction and Relocation of US Troops

Chosun Ilbo (Ahn Yong-kyun, "KEEP TROOPS ON PLACE, LAWMAKERS SAY," Seoul, 04/09/03) reported that a group consisting of mostly Grand National Party assemblymen that opposes the plan to relocate US troops here to south of the Han River said Wednesday that it would begin a signature campaign to promote its agenda. The Opposition to the Withdrawal of US Forces Group, led by the assemblymen Kim Yong Kap and Maeng Hyung Kyu and consisting of about 135 members, spoke at a press conference, saying it wanted to collect 10 million signatures. "We oppose even the fact that the issue of relocating and reducing U.S. forces is being raised during the first Korea-U.S. Treaty Policy Joint Talks in Seoul," a representative said. "The government should prevent the reduction or relocation of the 2nd Infantry Division away from the front." Placing the division at the front is a war prevention measure and a psychological line that reassures citizens on the peninsula."

III. Japan

1. Japan's Role in Iraq War

The Asahi Shimbun (Taro Karasaki, "TOKYO READY FOR REBUILDING AS WAR'S END NEARS," 04/08/03) reported that the Japanese government declared Monday the war in Iraq had entered its "final stages," and said the Japanese government would now focus on the reconstruction of the country. The government was reacting to news that US forces had pierced the heart of Baghdad and seized presidential palace complexes. However, government officials added the situation was still "fluctuating" and acknowledged that it was still too early to predict what kind of reconstruction framework lay ahead, and how Japan would contribute. Vice Foreign Minister Yukio Takeuchi said the ministry set up a task force Monday for the reconstruction of Iraq composed of nine ministry

bureaus and departments and headed by the Middle Eastern and African Affairs Bureau. The task force will coordinate government policy and consult with other governments, international organizations and NGOs on reconstruction.

Kyodo ("DPJ MEMBER'S QUESTION ON IRAQ WATERED DOWN BY COLLEAGUES," Tokyo, 04/08/03) reported that conservative members of the largest opposition Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) on Tuesday persuaded one of their colleagues to reword and water down a parliamentary question regarding the US-led war on Iraq by dropping the word "invasion." Azuma Konno agreed to change the phrasing to "the US use of arms" on Iraq after a brief discussion during a party meeting, apparently reflecting a lack of ideological unity in the DPJ, which has often been called "a hotchpotch" of lawmakers.

2. US on Japan's Role in Iraq Reconstruction

Kyodo ("JAPAN ASKED TO JOIN IN IRAQ'S POSTWAR INTERIM AUTHORITY," Washington, 04/08/03) reported that the US has asked Japan to join Britain and Australia in sending officials to act as foreign advisers in a US-led interim authority in postwar Iraq, Japanese and US sources said Tuesday. The offer for Japan to send advisers and play a direct role in postwar reconstruction of Iraq was apparently made in return for Japan's support of the war. According to the Japanese sources, Japan basically welcomes the US offer and has begun considering how to accept it, though it will be difficult to respond immediately due to Japan's position that the UN should play a major role in reconstructing Iraq. The interim authority will be made up of 20 departments in four areas -- reconstruction, humanitarian aid, civil administration and security. Each department will be headed by an Iraqi who was either a bureaucrat with few links to President Saddam Hussein or in exile. But the foreign advisers, with large staffs of their own, will make actual policy decisions. It will reign over Iraq after a short military occupation and until a democratic government will be set up by the Iraqis, which is expected to take about six months, the sources said.

3. Japan's Economic Interest in Iraq

The Asahi Shimbun ("AFTER SADDAM: OIL/ JAPAN IS EYEING ITS OIL INTERESTS ONCE RECONSTRUCTION WORK BEGINS IN IRAQ," 04/09/03) reported that the Japanese government is keen to assist in Iraq reconstruction because it hopes the assistance will lead to securing some of the country's oil, says a high-ranking official of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry. Until July 2002, Japan kept in contact with Iraq's oil ministry through the government-affiliated Japan Petroleum Exploration Co. (JAPEX). The goal was to improve Japan's chances of pursuing its oil interests once UN-imposed sanctions against Iraq are lifted. A JAPEX official handling issues involving oil from the Middle East called Iraq the "No. 1" country in the region for potential oil production. "Iraq has many promising oil fields that remain untouched," said the official. "Their technocrats are very talented, and I'm sure they will play a major role after the war." So far, neither Japan nor its oil firms have asserted their presence on the postwar map. "Japan would profit from striking a deal with the United States behind the scenes to pursue its oil interests rather than stake a claim on its own," said a senior official at a major Japanese oil firm. A senior trade ministry official agrees that close cooperation with the US is key. When it comes to funds and technology, the official notes, Japan's oil firms are hard pressed to compete with their US rivals. Still, the threat of political instability under a post-Saddam government remains a concern for Japan, whose oil policy has been at the mercy of turbulence in the region. Akihiko Tembo, president of oil firm Idemitsu Kosan Co., remains cautious about teaming up with the US oil industry. "The Japanese government has sided with the United States, but if anti-US sentiment swells in the Islamic world, Japan may face setbacks," Tembo said. Another key area of interest for Japan is the uncollected debts owed by Iraq.

Following the first oil crisis, Japan signed a deal with Iraq in 1974 guaranteeing Japan access to Iraq's oil supplies for 10 years in exchange for $1 billion (equivalent to about 200 billion yen at the time) in loans. About $6 billion of Japan's claims on public and private loans still remain unpaid due to disruptions in Iraqi oil exports caused mostly by war and economic sanctions. "It's possible that the postwar Iraq administration will increase its oil production and enable Japan to collect the claims in the form of oil supply," said an official at a major Japanese oil firm

4. Japan Anti-War Sentiment

The Japan Times ("LAWMAKERS PROTEST WAR," 04/09/03) reported that Japan's opposition lawmakers urged the US and Britain to end the Iraq war during a rally Tuesday at a Diet members' office building. "The use of force seems to solve situations but it actually just leads to new conflicts and terrorism," said Yukio Ubukata, a House of Representatives member of the opposition Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ). The rally, attended by about 200 people from civic groups and labor unions, was intended to press the government to scrap legislation on contingencies in case of foreign attacks on Japan. Lower House member Seiken Akamine of the Japanese Communist Party (JCP) criticized the government and the ruling coalition parties for trying to pass the war legislation "at a time when the (Japanese) people are feeling pain in their heart due to the Iraq war." 5. Japan Human Shields in Iraq

Kyodo ("NO. OF JAPANESE IN IRAQ RISES TO 43, 'HUMAN SHIELDS' TO 13," Tokyo, 04/08/03) reported that the number of Japanese nationals in Iraq rose by four from a day earlier to 43 Tuesday morning, with that of "human shields" in Baghdad to protest the US-led war rising by one to 13, the Foreign Ministry said. One person entered Baghdad and soon joined a group of human shields stationed at a power substation, and three journalists entered the country to go to a city some 100 kilometers west of the capital, the ministry 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.
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International Peace Research Institute (PRIME),
Meiji Gakuin University, Tokyo, Japan

Monash Asia Institute,
Monash University, Clayton, Australia

Brandon Yu: napsnet@nautilus.org

Berkeley, California, United States

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

Kim Young-soo: yskim328@hotmail.com
Seoul, Republic of Korea

Hibiki Yamaguchi: hibikiy84@hotmail.com
Tokyo, Japan

Saiko Iwata: saiko@akira.ne.jp
Tokyo, Japan

Hiroya Takagi: hiroya_takagi@hotmail.com
Tokyo, Japan

Peter Razvin: icipu@online.ru
Moscow, Russian Federation

Wu Chunsi: cswu@fudan.ac.cn
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