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I. United States

1. Food Aid to DPRK
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I. United States

1. Food Aid to DPRK

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2. Four-Party Talks Briefing and DPRK Food Aid

US State Department Spokesman Nicholas Burns ("STATE DEPARTMENT NOON BRIEFING, FEB. 10," USIA Transcript, 2/11/97), in response to a question as to whether the US has ever used food aid as a bargaining chip to induce the DPRK into political negotiations, said: "Not that I'm aware of. In fact, I said very clearly last week, repeatedly, we are not using food aid as any kind of lever to convince the North Koreans to approach the negotiating table in New York to have a briefing on the Four Party Talks." Asked if this phrasing meant that food aid may have been used as a bargaining chip at some point in the past, Burns said: "We've been trying to arrange a briefing on the Four Party Talks. The North Koreans have decided that they cannot attend those talks, at least at the present time, because they have on-going private, commercial negotiations with Cargill and other companies. We would like that deal to go forward. But we've never used food aid as a lever against the North Koreans; certainly have not because we have to pay attention to the humanitarian questions here."

3. US and DPRK to Meet at Panmunjom

The Associated Press ("U.S., N. KOREAN OFFICIALS TO MEET," Seoul, 2/11/97) reported that the ROK Defense Ministry says that US and DPRK military officials will meet Wednesday in the village of Panmunjom. The DPRK reportedly requested the meeting after twice postponing the US-ROK joint briefing on the four-party peace talks proposal, demanding that a pending deal for grain imports be concluded first. Whether the briefing and grain deal would be discussed at the meeting was not known. "Nothing of substance is on the known agenda," US military spokesman Jim Coles said Tuesday. The meeting was expected to include an exchange of greetings in recognition of Korea's celebration of the Lunar New Year on Saturday.

4. ROK National Sentenced for DPRK Incursion

United Press International ("S.KOREA WRITER GETS PRISON TERM FOR TRIP," Seoul, 2/11/97) reported that the ROK's Seoul District Court has sentenced novelist Kim Young to three and a half years in prison for entering the DPRK from the PRC last July. Judge Moon Hyong-ki found Kim guilty of disclosing "national secrets" to the DPRK, for giving interrogators a list of forty long-term political prisoners being held in the ROK and for allegedly making comments concerning the ideological struggle of the prisoners. The 39-year-old Kim, whose works include two novels about long-term prisoners who refuse to repent, is additionally banned from publishing for three years. Kim says he was drunk at the time and passed into the DPRK accidentally. The ROK's National Security Law calls for up to seven years in prison for any act that "praises, encourages, advertises, or supports the

activities of an Anti-State Organization," namely the DPRK. In a secret session in December, the ROK parliament restored the power of the National Security Planning Agency to investigate suspected pro-DPRK activities and to charge those who praise the DPRK or who fail to report such acts.

5. ROK Financial Scandal

United Press International ("PROSECUTORS SEEK WARRANT FOR TOP KIM AIDE," Seoul, 2/11/97) reported that ROK prosecutors have applied for arrest warrants for a top aide to ROK President Kim Young-sam and the third-ranking official in Kim's ruling New Korea party. Prosecutors sought both warrants on charges of bribery in connection with the widening investigation into graft behind the collapse of Hanbo Iron and Steel, the ROK's second largest steel maker, with unpaid loans of more than US$5.8 billion. Hong In-kil, who became a member of parliament last year after 16 years as a top secretary to Kim, is suspected to have received over US$900,000 last year from Hanbo founder Chung Tae-soo in return for pressuring banks to keep extending loans to the cash-strapped company. Chung Jae-chul, New Korea Party national convention chairman, allegedly received US$115,000 in 1995 from Chung. Prosecutors have already arrested the Hanbo founder and are questioning other past and current bank presidents regarding Hanbo's troubled financing.

6. Russian Nuclear Sale to India

The Associated Press (Dilip Ganguly, "RUSSIA MAY AID INDIA'S NUKE QUEST," New Delhi, India, 2/11/97) reported that India may finally be near completing a deal to purchase two billion-dollar nuclear reactors from Russia. The sale of the reactors, agreed to eight years ago, was delayed by the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi and the collapse of the Soviet Union. India's foreign minister, I.K. Gujral, is in Moscow this week pressing Russia to follow through with the sale. The US and other Western governments oppose the sale on the grounds that it could help India to develop a nuclear bomb. Russian "exports of nuclear power reactors or missile-related equipment and technology to India would be of concern," US Assistant Secretary of State Robin Raphel recently told the US Congress. However, Uday Bhaskar of India's state-funded Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses said, "We are playing by the rules. It is the US which is not playing. These two reactors are light-water reactors and have no military use whatsoever." India increasingly is looking to nuclear technology to help meet the growing energy needs of its population, now numbering nearly 1 billion and reliant on aging thermal and hydroelectric projects. Economists estimate that power shortages cost Indian industry US$2.7 billion annually, equivalent to 1.5 percent of gross domestic product. However, Western concerns were fueled last year when India refused to sign the nuclear test ban treaty adopted by almost every other UN member, saying it discriminates against nations that do not have nuclear capabilities. India has also refused to sign the 1968 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. New Delhi says it must keep the option to build nuclear weapons open because its neighboring enemies, Pakistan and China, are nuclear-capable.

II. Republic of Korea

1. DPRK-Taiwan Nuclear Waste Deal

Taiwan's controversial move to ship nuclear waste to the DPRK has been found to contravene a resolution adopted by the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (UNCSD), Yonhap News Agency reported from the UN Headquarters in New York today. The UNCSD, under the UN Economic and Social Council, adopted a resolution in May 1994 stipulating that nuclear waste material should not be exported to a country not equipped with appropriate storage or disposal facilities. UN officials were quoted as saying that the resolution has now become standard procedure in the international community. (KPS, "TRANSFER OF NUCLEAR WASTE IS IN VIOLATION OF U.N. RESOLUTION," Seoul, 02/11/97)

2. PRC-DPRK Relations

The PRC has been reducing economic assistance to the DPRK, the Germany-based "Frankfurt Allegmanier" reported Monday. The paper reported that PRC assistance to the DPRK, which typically was in the form of trade, has been declining on both sides since 1993. In 1996, the DPRK's shipment of goods to the PRC had been reduced by 22 percent to total US$27 million, and imports from the PRC were reduced 70 percent to US$202.5 million. The paper added that the PRC apparently does not to want to receive the non-negotiable DPRK currency in return for oil and coke. (Chosun Ilbo, "PRC REDUCES ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO NORTH," Seoul, 02/11/97)

3. US Forces in Japan

The disclosure of the US Marines' use of uranium bullets on the southern island of Okinawa has angered Japan, but Japanese officials say they were more dismayed about the delay in notification. The US military acknowledged Monday that its jets mistakenly fired 1,520 uranium bullets during shooting practice near the island. Although US officials said the radioactive bullets posed no health threat, it wasn't clear why the military waited a year to tell Japan. "It's not that the level of radioactivity is the problem," Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto said in an article in Tuesday's Mainichi newspaper. "Rather, the problem is they took so long to inform us." The US military in Japan said in a statement that "it regrets these incidents and the late notification." The uranium bullets are not classified as nuclear weapons; uranium is used in the ammunition to increase its capabilities to pierce armor and other hard material. Under US Marine Corps policy, uranium rounds are not allowed on training ranges in Japan. However, an AV-8B Harrier aircraft fired the 25-mm rounds, each containing 5.2 ounces (147.4 grams) of depleted uranium, because they had been incorrectly labeled, the US government said. (The Korea Times, "US PLANES USE URANIUM BULLETS NEAR OKINAWA," Seoul, 02/11/97)

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

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Produced by the Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainable Development.

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