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CONTENTS

I. United States

1. US Policy toward DPRK
2. Bush Visit to PRC
3. Cross-Straits Relations
4. US Troops on Okinawa

II. Japan 1. DPRK Air Raid Evacuation Exercise
2. Japanese View of the Korean Peninsula
3. Japanese-US-ROK Policy Coordination
4. US View of US-ROK Summit Meeting
5. Japanese View of PRC Missile Development
6. Japanese-Russian Territorial Issue
7. Japanese History Textbook
8. Prime Minister's Resignation

I. United States

1. US Policy toward DPRK

US State Department Spokesman Richard Boucher, (International Information Programs, "TRANSCRIPT: STATE DEPARTMENT NOON BRIEFING," 03/09/01) denied that there was a disagreement between US Secretary of State Colin Powell and the President George W. Bush on US policy toward the DPRK. Boucher said that the administrations policy toward the DPRK is based on "a number of essential elements." He stated, "The first and foremost is the issue of consultation: consulting with the Japanese, consulting with our Korean allies, and having them consult with us on their various tracks and prospects of moving forward with North Korea. The second is support for President Kim Dae Jung's policy of pursuing a reduction of tensions on the Peninsula. The third element is realism. It is a clear understanding of the nature of this regime, no illusions about what they are and why they are willing to open up a little at this point." He added, "The fourth, is a chance

to review the policy, and that's what we are still doing now.... The fifth sort of stems from the earlier comment about the nature of the regime, the need for verification. Verification and monitoring remain very essential to whatever we do." Regarding the Clinton administration's policy toward the DPRK, Boucher stated, "Look at the record, and you will see quite clearly that verification was on the agenda, but it wasn't done.... And the fact that the last administration, for time and for a lot of reasons, wasn't able to finish verification, leads to the statement of fact, that the Secretary and the President have been making, that verification remains to be done, and it is a vitally important element." He concluded, "We want to build on the positive elements from the efforts of the past. We want to add to that the key, crucial component of verification, and we want to do it with realism and in consultation with our allies. And how exactly we'll proceed remains to be announced."

Salon.com (Jake Tapper, "DID BUSH BUNGLE RELATIONS WITH NORTH KOREA?" Washington, 3/15/01) reported that US foreign policy experts analyzed the contradictory statements by US President George W. Bush and Secretary of State Colin Powell during the recent summit with ROK President Kim Dae-jung to try to determine the new administration's policy toward the DPRK. In a background briefing following the summit, a senior administration official denied that Bush's statement indicated that the DPRK was not complying with 1994 Agreed Framework. The official added, "But what there is concern about is the verification of existing arrangements.... There are transparency questions that North Korea is not a transparent state, and therefore we do not have a 100 percent ability to monitor these agreements. So his concern about them is not of a specific instance of violation, but our confidence in whether or not these agreements are being violated or not." Joel Wit, a guest scholar at the Brookings Institution, said that the Bush administration "really don't have their act together." He added that Bush's comments "reflect a certain viewpoint prevalent around many Republicans and some others, too," but that clearly they were also "the result of poor staff work and poor preparation for the meeting." An anonymous foreign policy expert said that the statement reflected Bush's general lack of interest in nuance, which "can cause problems with a close ally like South Korea. And it might cause serious problems with the country you're trying to deal with." However, Frank Gaffney, president of the Center for Security Policy and a former assistant secretary of defense in the Reagan administration, argued, "There are real concerns about the absence of real change by North Korea. And with an absence of any real changes, suggestions of concessions, political legitimization and perhaps even assistance is pretty much a debatable proposition." He added, "My personal preference would not be to have Colin Powell going off to tell people what the policy is by his own authority. If Powell is going to do that, I think it's a very good thing that the president feels secure enough to say, 'This is the policy; it's not the same as General Powell said,' even if he didn't say that directly."

2. Bush Visit to PRC

The New York Times (Marc Lacey, "BUSH PLANS STATE VISIT TO CHINA IN FALL," Washington, 3/16/01) reported that US administration officials said Friday that US President George W. Bush intended to make a state visit to the PRC in October, but that the White House was holding off on an official announcement of the visit. Bush had already announced plans to visit Shanghai in October to attend the annual Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, and administration officials said Friday that he would probably stay on to meet with PRC officials in Beijing. A senior US administration official said, "This will be the beginning of an opportunity to talk with them about missile defense. Missile defense really should not be seen as a threat by anyone that doesn't intend to blackmail us." Regarding the PRC concern about Taiwan's requests to buy advanced US weapons, a senior Bush aide said, "The Chinese do have a role to play in this. If they are not appearing to threaten Taiwan, then Taiwan's needs are different than if the PRC is presenting a threat to Taiwan." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for March 16, 2001.]

3. Cross-Straits Relations

Agence France Presse ("CHINA HOLDS FIRM ON CONDITIONS FOR TAIWAN TALKS," Beijing, 3/16/01) reported that the PRC reiterated Friday that it would not reopen talks with Taiwan until the Taiwanese government clearly affirms the "one-China" principle. Li Yafei, vice-director of the PRC's Taiwan Affairs Office, said that there is only "one China ... all problems can be discussed once Taiwanese leaders recognize the 'one China principle'." The PRC's Taiwan Office Director Sun Yunfa also reiterated the condition, adding that Taiwan's move to host a visit by the Dalai Lama demonstrates the insincerity of the Taiwan leadership's desire to improve cross-straits relations.

Agence France Presse ("TAIWAN WARNS BEIJING ABOUT THE 'PRICE' OF USING FORCE," Taipei, 3/16/01) reported that, following a report by the Washington Times of a new missile base in the PRC, Taiwan on Friday warned the PRC that it faced "grave" consequences if force was used against the island. Lin Chong-pin, vice chairman of Taiwan's Mainland Affairs Council, said, "The negative impact of using military means to handle cross-strait issue is serious. If Beijing launched the missiles, the price would be very high and the damage would be grave." He said that military means were "counterproductive" and a "hurt to the feelings of people from both sides can not be repaired."

4. US Troops on Okinawa

Agence France Presse ("OKINAWA GOVERNOR URGES CUT IN US FORCES AHEAD US-JAPAN SUMMIT," Tokyo, 3/16/01) reported that Keiichi Inamine, the governor of the Japanese prefecture of Okinawa, on Friday called on Japan's central government for a reduction in the number of US troops stationed in his prefecture. A spokesman for Inamine said, "It is the will of Okinawa that Prime Minister Mori brings up the issue at the summit next week. Okinawa has repeatedly told the Japanese national government to consider ways to cut the US military presence in Okinawa. And this time, we are putting the request in writing to convey our feeling to national leaders." Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori said he planned to raise the Okinawa issue with US President George W. Bush when they meet on March 19. Mori said, "I want to bring up the Okinawa issue. Lightening the burden of Okinawa is necessary for better Japan-US ties."

II. Japan

1. DPRK Air Raid Evacuation Exercise

The Asahi Shimbun ("DPRK AIR RAID EVACUATION EXERCISE," 03/13/2001) reported that according to the PRC People's Daily on March 12, the DPRK conducted a civilian air raid evacuation exercise in Pyongyang from March 6-8. The report said that Pyongyang residents evacuated to underground or air raid shelters after a siren beep. The exercise was conducted twice a day for three days. The report said that the exercise was conducted in March and November until two years ago, but that the last year's exercise was cancelled because of the reduced tension on the Korean Peninsula. The report pointed out that given the cancellation of the inter-Korean ministerial-level meeting, the resumption of the exercise this time might also reflect the DPRK's reaction to US policy toward the DPRK.

2. Japanese View of the Korean Peninsula

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("INSTITUTE OF DEFENSE STUDIES IS CONCERNED ABOUT PRC MILITARY INCREASE," 03/10/2001) reported that the National Institute for Defense Studies, the

Japanese Defense Agency's research institute, stated in its annual East Asia Strategic Outlook on March 10 regarding the situation on the Korean Peninsula, "The confrontational structure that has persisted for a long time cannot be expected to be immediately converted to a peaceful and stable one." However, it hailed the realization of the inter-Korean summit meeting last year. As for the DPRK, the outlook said, "Kim Jong-il is having a hard time balancing the domestic change caused by his opening policy with the maintenance of his regime."

3. Japanese-US-ROK Policy Coordination

The Yomiuri Shimbun (Yoshikazu Shirakawa, "JAPANESE-US-ROK HIGH-RANKING TALKS MAY BE HELD IN SEOUL ON MARCH 26," Seoul, 03/14/2001) reported that Seoul-based diplomatic sources revealed that Japan, the US, and the ROK are now jointly working to set a meeting of the Trilateral Policy Coordination Group in Seoul on March 26. The report said that the meeting aims to coordinate policy among the three counties toward the DPRK because some difference emerged during the recent US-ROK summit meeting.

4. US View of US-ROK Summit Meeting

The Japan Times ("THE CHOICE IS NORTH KOREA'S," Washington, 03/15/2001) carried in its editorial on March 15 an essay by Robert A. Manning, a senior fellow and director of Asian Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations, on the recent US-ROK summit meeting. Manning argued that a careful look at what was actually said between the two leaders reveals more common ground than the media coverage would suggest and that the DPRK will likely determine the path pursued by both the US and the ROK. He said that the media feasted on the mixed messages from a skeptical President George W. Bush and Secretary of State Colin Powell and the gaps between Bush's and ROK President Kim Dae-jung's perspectives on the DPRK. However, he said that he suspects that the widely reported policy differences may in the end be more questions of tactics and emphasis than of strategy and goals. Manning viewed Kim's visit as a useful, if somewhat painful, exercise for both sides, part of a "search for consensus" in policy formulation for a government still in formation--and of policy coordination among allies. He pointed out that Bush is sincere and serious about wanting to bolster ties to US allies, as he said repeatedly during the joint press conference and statement. Manning also pointed out that perhaps the most revealing point that Bush made was his comment that "I do have some skepticism about the leader of North Korea, but that's not going to preclude us from trying to achieve the common objective." Manning also said that even Kim, in his speech before the American Enterprise Institute, mentioned that changes in the DPRK may be "merely temporary or tactical." He argued that for all the media sensationalism it is clear that the Bush administration supports the ROK's Sunshine Policy. However, where the debate begins in Washington is the same place it begins in Seoul: how to implement the Sunshine Policy and how to apply reciprocity. Manning warned that in this regard, it is important to keep in mind that the fundamental problem lies not in Seoul or Washington, but in Pyongyang. He concluded that the next act should be a high-level consultation--before the next DPRK-ROK summit--where the US and the ROK, and then also Japan, forge a collective strategy for managing change on the Korean Peninsula. He also concluded that the policy challenge is to create a situation that makes it as inviting as possible for the DPRK to make the right choices.

5. Japanese View of PRC Missile Development

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("INSTITUTE OF DEFENSE STUDIES IS CONCERNED ABOUT PRC MILITARY INCREASE," 03/10/2001) reported that the National Institute for Defense Studies, the

Japanese Defense Agency's research institute, stated in its annual East Asia Strategic Outlook on March 10 regarding the PRC's missile development, "The PRC would increase the power of its inter-continental ballistic missiles (ICBM) regardless of US national missile defense (NMD) deployment." The outlook, however, also stated that US NMD could the PRC's ICBM development, calling for US-PRC strategic talks.

6. Japanese-Russian Territorial Issue

The Mainichi Shimbun (Hiroyuki Tanaka, "RUSSIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL DENIES AGREEMENT ON DEADLINE FOR SOLUTION TO TERRITORIAL ISSUE," Moscow, 03/16/2001) reported that according to the Russian Interfax News Agency, a Russian Foreign Ministry high-ranking official responsible for Asia-Pacific affairs stated regarding the Japanese-Russian summit meeting slated for March 25, "There is no agreement on (including in a joint statement) a deadline (for solving the territorial issue between Russia and Japan)." The report said that Japan has been striving to set another deadline for the solution of the territorial issue since the failure of the Glasnoyalsk Agreement, which aimed to solve the issue by 2000. However, the official's statement reflects Russia's negative view of Japan's effort, said the report.

7. Japanese History Textbook

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("KONO DENIES PRC AND ROK INFLUENCE ON HISTORY TEXTBOOK SCREENING," 03/10/2001) reported that Japanese Foreign Minister Yohei Kono stated at the Upper House budgetary session on March 9 regarding the PRC's and the ROK's criticism on the Japanese history textbook, "Our history textbooks are made according to the existing rules and procedures. I don't think domestic interference from outside cannot influence (the screening of the textbooks).

8. Prime Minister's Resignation

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("PRIME MINISTER MORI DENIES INTENTION TO RESIGN AT LOWER HOUSE PRELIMINARY SESSION," 03/16/2001) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori denied his intention to resign at the Upper House preliminary session on March 15. Mori stated, "I have no intention to resign for the time being." The report said that Mori's statement was a reply to questions by opposition members.

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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