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I. United States

1. US DPRK Response Alternatives

Reuters ("US SEES TWO OPTIONS ON NORTH KOREA, OFFICIAL SAYS,") Ottawa, 10/18/02) reported that the US sees two main alternatives for dealing with the DPRK: pursuing a verifiable deal to eliminate its nuclear program or isolation and deterrence, a senior US official said on Friday. The official, who was visiting the Canadian capital, told Reuters the administration of President George W. Bush was likely to question the value of an agreement with a country that violated its last one, under which it was to abandon the pursuit of nuclear weapons in return for US energy aid. "You can imagine the debate on that," he said, after discussions on arms issues with Canadian officials. "It would be, 'Does that make any sense? I mean they've basically shown that they're determined to get these weapons, and they violated the first agreement. What makes you think they won't violate the second agreement?'" "The only way to have a reasonable assurance that they weren't cheating again is to have highly intrusive inspections, like the kind that we've had in Iraq," the official said, adding

that the Iraqi situation had not worked well because of obstructionism by Baghdad.

2. DPRK Nuclear Program Speculation

The Associated Press (Matt Kelley, "ENRICHING URANIUM COULD MAKE NORTH KOREA'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM EASIER TO HIDE," Washington, 10/18/02) carried an analytical article that reported that the DPRK's decision to enrich uranium rather than plutonium, means it is pursuing a nuclear weapons technology that is easier to hide and more reliable, but harder to mount on a missile. Still, the DPRK can put a nuclear warhead on any of its missiles, including those under development that may be able to reach US territory. "They've clearly demonstrated a missile technology far beyond the range of Japan," said Charles Curtis, president of the Nuclear Threat Initiative, a private group dedicated to stemming the spread of nuclear weapons. "Putting a warhead on a missile isn't a problem for them." Before agreeing to halt its nuclear weapons program in 1994, the DPRK had produced enough plutonium to make at least one bomb, CIA assessments say. US intelligence agencies and Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld assume the DPRK made a plutonium weapon or two. Still more plutonium could be obtained by processing 8,000 spent fuel rods from a nuclear reactor the DPRK agreed to shut down as part of the 1994 agreement. Those rods have enough plutonium to make about five nuclear weapons, the US government says. In the mid-1990s, the US sealed the rods in canisters meant to keep the DPRK from extracting the plutonium for weapons. But now that the White House says the DPRK has declared the 1994 agreement void, experts worry there's nothing to stop the DPRK from opening the canisters, processing the rods and making more weapons. "You have this bomb material sitting there right now that they could reprocess," said Daniel Pinkston, a Korea specialist at the Monterey Institute for International Studies. Why, then, would North Korea switch to a drive to enrich uranium? "Enriched uranium is easier to hide," said Gary Milhollin of the Wisconsin Project on Nuclear Arms Control. "Nuclear reactors are fairly difficult to hide, and you need a reactor to make plutonium." North Korea's apparent plan is to build a series of centrifuges to separate weapons-grade uranium from lower-grade uranium, experts on North Korea's nuclear program and U.S. officials say. Those centrifuges are relatively small, and even with a series of 1,000 or more, enriching enough uranium for a weapon would be a very slow process. The system the DPRK plans would make enough for one or two bombs a year, said former UN nuclear inspector David Albright. Uranium bomb designs are simpler and more reliable than those using plutonium. Plutonium weapons are less reliable because they require very precise measurements, assembly and ignition to work as designed. "Plutonium weapons are smaller and therefore more suitable for missile warheads, but they're harder to make," said Joseph Cirincione of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. "Uranium weapons are easier to make, but much larger and more suited for air-dropped bombs or shipping containers." The DPRK has the technology to make smaller, more advanced weapons using much less of either uranium or plutonium, however, said Curtis of the Nuclear Threat Institute, who as a top Energy Department official had been involved in the effort to isolate the 8,000 North Korean fuel rods. That means the DPRK could make weapons small enough to fit atop any of its arsenal of missiles. "You can say, 'Well, North Korea's missiles aren't that accurate, their guidance systems are not very sophisticated.' But all you need is one," Pinkston said.

3. DPRK Plutonium Production

The Associated Press (George Jahn, "HEAD OF UN NUCLEAR AGENCY SAYS NORTH KOREA PRODUCED MORE PLUTONIUM THAN IT HAS DECLARED," Vienna, 10/18/02) reported that pushing to establish the extent of the DPRK's illegal nuclear weapons program, the head of the UN atomic agency on Friday said it could take three years for his inspectors to "see everything" - provided the DPRK lets them in. Mohamed ElBaradei, director general of the International Atomic

Energy Agency, said information on how far along the DPRK is remained "murky." The DPRK probably has produced more plutonium - which can be used in nuclear warheads - over the past decade than it has declared, he told reporters. It could be grams or kilograms," ElBaradei said, refusing to speculate on whether the DPRK was near the eight-kilogram (17.6-pound) threshold needed for a nuclear weapon. "We need to go out and do a proper inspection to be able to estimate the amount." ElBaradei said since 1993, outside inspectors have been only been given access to a scattering of facilities to verify that they are not producing weapons-grade material. At Nyongbyon and Taechon, the IAEA team monitors activities at two nuclear power plants, a fuel rod manufacturing facility, a radiochemical laboratory, and a reactor. Only full and free inspections that go substantially beyond such limited access could establish the full scope of any DPRK nuclear weapons program, ElBaradei said. The Vienna-based agency on Friday urged the DPRK to send a negotiating team to the Austrian capital or allow an IAEA mission to visit to discuss "full compliance with its nuclear nonproliferation obligations."

4. PRC-US DPRK Nuclear Program Discussions

Reuters (Jeremy Page, "U.S., CHINA DISCUSS NORTH KOREA NUCLEAR PROGRAM 33 MINUTES AGO," Beijing, 10/18/02) reported that US Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly met PRC officials on Friday to urge the PRC to stop what US officials say is assistance for a secret DPRK nuclear weapons program. US Embassy officials declined to say whom Kelly had met. He was to leave the PRC on Saturday, heading to the ROK and Japan for talks on the US assertion that the DPRK has admitted having a secret nuclear weapons program. In Washington on Friday, officials said Kelly had had "very useful and productive" talks in Beijing and the US believed the DPRK shared US concerns about the program. State Department spokesman Richard Boucher told reporters: "We've had a long history of cooperation with China on Korean peninsula issues and both sides intend to continue that. "We think the Chinese government shares our concern about the possible introduction of nuclear weapons into the Korean peninsula. We hope to proceed on the basis of that shared concern and we will continue our consultations with China."

5. US on DPRK Nuclear Technology Transfer

The New York Times (David E. Sanger and James Dao, "U.S. SAYS PAKISTAN GAVE TECHNOLOGY TO NORTH KOREA," Washington, 10/17/02) reported that US intelligence officials have concluded that Pakistan, a vital ally since last year's terrorist attacks, was a major supplier of critical equipment for the DPRK's newly revealed clandestine nuclear weapons program, current and former senior American officials said today. The equipment, which may include gas centrifuges used to create weapons-grade uranium, appears to have been part of a barter deal beginning in the late 1990's in which the DPRK supplied Pakistan with missiles it could use to counter India's nuclear arsenal, the officials said. "What you have here," said one official familiar with the intelligence, "is a perfect meeting of interests the North had what the Pakistanis needed, and the Pakistanis had a way for Kim Jong Il to restart a nuclear program we had stopped." The PRC and Russia were less prominent suppliers, officials said. The White House said tonight that it would not discuss Pakistan's role or any other intelligence information. Nor would senior administration officials who briefed reporters today discuss exactly what intelligence they showed to DPRK officials two weeks ago, prompting the DPRK's declaration that it had secretly started a program to enrich uranium in violation of its past commitments. The trade between Pakistan and DPRK appears to have occurred around 1997, roughly two years before General Pervez Musharraf took power. However, the relationship appears to have continued after General Musharraf became president, and there is some evidence that a commercial relationship between the two countries extended beyond September 11 of last year. A spokesman for the Pakistan Embassy, Asad Hayatuddin, said it was

"absolutely incorrect" to accuse Pakistan of providing nuclear weapons technology to DPRK. "We have never had an accident or leak or any export of fissile material or nuclear technology or knowledge," he said.

6. ROK-US DPRK Diplomacy

The Associated Press (Christopher Torchia, "SOUTH KOREA AND THE UNITED STATES PURSUE DIPLOMACY AS NORTH KOREA REMAINS SILENT," Seoul, 10/18/02) reported that the a top ROK negotiator plans to travel this weekend to the DPRK to discuss recent nuclear developments. ROK Unification Minister Jeong Se-hyun was to fly Saturday to Pyongyang for talks scheduled well before the US revelation that the DPRK has admitted developing nuclear bombs. Jeong's original plan was to promote projects to bring peace to the divided Korean peninsula, but those measures are now in jeopardy. The ROK says dialogue is the best way to deal with concerns about the DPRK, including the nuclear issue. The US, which says it wants a peaceful resolution to the DPRK problem at the same time that it considers war against Iraq, was urgently pursuing dialogue with allies in Europe and Asia. Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and ROK President Kim Dae-jung were expected to discuss the DPRK at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum in Mexico next week. "It's difficult to conclude whether the North Korean nuclear program is on the drawing board, or in the stage of building facilities, or in the stage of developing weapons," Jeong, the unification minister, said in an interview with ROK's KBS radio. However, US Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld said he believed the DPRK already has a "small number" of nuclear weapons. The DPRK was silent Friday about its program and the international uproar it has triggered, but said it is committed to a key project aimed at reconciling the two Koreas: the re-linking of a cross-border railway.

7. DPRK-ROK Railway Developments

The Associated Press (Christopher Torchia, "NORTH KOREA TALKS UP CROSS-BORDER RAILWAY, BUT STILL NO WORD ON NUCLEAR WEAPONS PROGRAM," Seoul, 10/17/02) reported that the DPRK was silent Friday about its nuclear weapons program, but said it was committed to the completion of a cross-border railway. The DPRK's state-run news agency, KCNA, said the project was "greatly helpful" to peacemaking efforts in the Asia-Pacific region as well as the expansion of economic links in the region. It welcomed a recent Russian proposal to hold talks with the DPRK and the ROK to discuss linking the inter-Korean and Trans-Siberian railroads. But the future of the railway construction was unclear after the US said Wednesday that the DPRK had admitted to having a nuclear weapons program in violation of bilateral and international accords. A defiant posture by the DPRK could destabilize the region, although ROK officials were hopeful that their secretive neighbor was prepared to negotiate. KCNA cited an official from the DPRK Ministry of Railways, and the statement appeared to be aimed at Russia, an enthusiastic supporter of the project because South Korean goods could be ferried to Europe via the Trans-Siberian railroad. "We have already opened some areas along the strictly guarded Military Demarcation Line and held groundbreaking ceremonies for the project to reconnect the rail links between the north and south of Korea," KCNA quoted the official as saying.

II. Japan

1. US Bases in Japan

Kyodo ("ISHIHARA, ARMITAGE DISCUSS AIR BASE," Washington, 10/09/02) reported that Tokyo Governor Shintaro Ishihara asked US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage to back his idea of converting the US Yokota Air Base in western Tokyo into a joint civilian-military airport. "I think the governor did raise the issue of the Yokota air base and the possible use of that as a civilian facility," State Department spokesman Richard Boucher told a regular news briefing, referring to a 45-minute meeting between Ishihara and Armitage. "The deputy secretary said, as we have before, it's a matter for discussion between the national governments of the United States and Japan." Ishihara was in Washington when terrorists attacked the US on Sept. 11, 2001, forcing him to cancel his appointments.

Kyodo ("ISHIHARA TAKES AIR BASE TO WASHINGTON," Washington, 10/10/02) reported that Tokyo Governor Shintaro Ishihara met senior White House officials to discuss his proposal to convert the US Yokota Air Base in western Tokyo into a joint civilian-military airport. Ishihara spoke with James Moriarty, senior director for Asian affairs at the White House's National Security Council, and Michael Green, NSC director for Asian affairs. Ishihara later told reporters he knows the Yokota base issue is intrinsically a matter that should be handled by both national governments. "(However,) I made the issue an agendum for the talks and had US officials take notes," he said, emphasizing the significance of the Yokota base issue being on record. During the talks, Ishihara is believed to have put forward the benefits of his proposal, which would see the base used by commercial aircraft. Ishihara said he was asked about the noise a jumbo jet might make while using the runway at Yokota.

2. Japanese Nuclear Industry Scandal

The Japan Times ("METI NUCLEAR WATCHDOG TO OVERSEE ALL INSPECTIONS," 10/07/02) reported that the Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency has decided to supervise all inspections of nuclear reactors as part of efforts to prevent a recurrence of reactor damage cover-ups by Tokyo Electric Power Co. (TEPCO), agency sources said. The agency will introduce "voluntary inspections" covering all equipment and facilities regarding reactors and put them under state control. Aside from the voluntary checks, the state regularly examines reactors, but government checkups only cover some important reactor facilities. Currently, voluntary checks by power companies are not covered by any law. A series of damage cover-ups by TEPCO occurred during such voluntary inspections. The new inspections, though also voluntary, will be conducted under the Electric Utility Law. Under the revised law, the government is expected to confirm the results of the voluntary inspections during regular checkups or by spot checks. Power companies are to be required to maintain records of inspections until respective parts are completely replaced, and they will be fined if records are lost or falsified, the sources said. In addition, power companies failing to report to the state about accidents or major problems with reactors will face penalties under the amendment, but they will not be required to report minor problems. No fine amounts have been specified. The agency plans to submit a bill to amend the law to an extraordinary Diet session to be convened Oct. 18. It aims to enforce the amendment about half a year after enactment.

3. Investigation of the Spy Ship

Kyodo ("OGI INSPECTS NORTH KOREAN SPY SHIP WITH COAST GUARD CHIEF," Kagoshima, 10/08/02) reported that Japanese transport minister Chikage Ogi inspected the North Korean spy ship that was salvaged last month from the East China Sea and is now moored at a private dockyard in Kagoshima Prefecture. Ogi, minister of land, infrastructure and transport, inspected the ship together with Kenichi Fukaya, chief of the Japan Coast Guard. During the inspection, Ogi offered words of encouragement to the coast guard personnel in charge of the investigation. Thus far, more

than 700 items have been recovered from the ship, including a number of pins bearing the image of late North Korean leader Kim Il Sung and a large cache of weapons and ammunition, including portable ground-to-air missile launchers and bullets. Japan has concluded the ship was used by the DPRK for espionage activities.

4. SDP on DPRK Abduction Case

The Japan Times ("SDP CHIEF DOI APOLOGIZES FOR ABDUCTION INACTION," 10/08/02) reported that Social Democratic Party (SDP) leader Takako Doi apologized to the families of the people kidnapped to North Korea, admitting that the party, despite its long-standing ties with the Korean Workers' Party, failed to sufficiently pursue the abduction issue. "The party's effort may have not been sufficient to live up to the expectation of the families of the abducted," Doi told a news conference. "I would like to apologize to the families." She said the party would review its policy toward the DPRK in light of the revelations. Since 1963, party delegates have visited Pyongyang more than a dozen times. Doi herself headed a delegation in October 1990. Doi emphasized that the party brought up the kidnapping issue with its contacts in the Workers' Party. But the North Koreans repeatedly denied any acts of abduction and told her lies all along, she said. The party has been widely criticized for maintaining a thesis that appeared in its July 1997 party bulletin, in which the author described the kidnapping issue as a "fiction devised by the South Korean intelligence." The thesis was still on the party's official home page even after the DPRK admitted to the kidnappings during the summit with Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi on Sept. 17. The party removed the thesis from the Web site.

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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