

# NAPSNet Daily Report 19 February, 1997

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### **I. United States**

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Reuters ("TALKS ON NORTH KOREA DEFECTOR STALL," Seoul, 2/19/97) reported that ROK Foreign Ministry spokesman Lee Kyu-hyung on Wednesday said talks were stalled on the fate of top DPRK ideologue Hwang Jang-yop, who sought asylum in Seoul's Beijing consulate last week. Lee denied a Japanese newspaper report that the PRC and the ROK had agreed that Hwang could leave Beijing for the ROK as early as this week. "Unfortunately, we have not made any real progress in our talks with China and it is too early to talk about when Hwang could leave Beijing," Lee said. Another Foreign Ministry official, who asked not to be identified, said: "He is not likely to leave within a few days. It could be weeks before Hwang can secure his departure." Japan's Yomiuri Shimbun newspaper had reported that Seoul and Beijing had "basically agreed to transfer Hwang" to the

ROK. The DPRK had earlier indicated it was softening its stance over Hwang, whose defection marks one of the greatest embarrassments for one of the world's few remaining communist states. Meanwhile, Lee Hong-koo of the ruling New Korea Party said Hwang's defection was pushing the DPRK's leadership into desperation, and warned that Seoul's policy of seeking reunification of the Korean peninsula by treating Pyongyang as an equal partner might have to be abandoned. "Severe food shortages and economic difficulties are driving the North Korean system to an irreversible

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The Associated Press ("LITTLE PROGRESS IN KOREA TALKS," Beijing, 2/19/97) reported that the PRC on Wednesday publicly called on the DPRK and the ROK to break their impasse over Hwang's defection. The official Xinhua News Agency reported the PRC government's appeal to the two Koreas to calmly "work to seek a proper solution." "The Chinese side does not want to see any new tension occur on the Korean peninsula because of this incident," Xinhua said. The brief news agency dispatch, read on state-run television's national nightly news broadcast, was the first news most PRC residents had been given of the standoff. More and more people have gathered daily near the cordoned-off streets surrounding the South Korean consulate. The onlookers can see several armored personnel carriers beyond the cordons manned by large numbers of police. That such highly visible security measures could go unreported in the state-run media for a week shows the difficult position in which Hwang's defection places the PRC government. Talks on Hwang's asylum request were stalled, despite signs that the DPRK government has resigned itself to the defection. Ryu Kwang-suk, chief of the ROK Foreign Ministry's Asia-Pacific Bureau, said in Seoul that the ROK had requested the PRC's assessment of a rare public comment Tuesday by DPRK leader Kim Jong-il declaring that his country had no need for "cowards" and that those who wanted to leave should go. The broadcast made no mention of Hwang, but came just one day after the DPRK indicated it might accept Hwang's defection.

### **1b. Hwang Defection: Impact on Nuclear Plant Construction**

The Associated Press ("SEOUL DELAYS NORTH NUKE AID," Seoul, 2/19/97) reported that the ROK said Wednesday that it will delay sending to the DPRK a 30-member team of nuclear technicians that had been scheduled to leave Saturday for work on two nuclear reactors promised to the DPRK under the 1994 US-DPRK nuclear agreement. ROK officials said the team now will not leave until the DPRK provides additional guarantees for the safety of its members. Details of the additional demands were being worked out, they said. However, a shipment of drills, pumps and other equipment for the technical team was sent to the DPRK as scheduled Wednesday from the southern port of Pusan.

### **1c. Hwang Defection: Wall Street Journal Analysis**

Michael Schuman wrote in The Wall Street Journal ("DEFECTOR HWANG'S DATA MAY STIR POLICY CHANGE TO NORTH KOREA," Seoul, 2/19/97) that the defection of DPRK ideologue Hwang Jang-yop could significantly change US and ROK policy toward the DPRK. The reason is that Hwang, the highest ranking DPRK official to defect at least since the 1960s, may know more about key issues -- such as Pyongyang's suspected nuclear-weapons program and the internal standings of the DPRK

leadership -- than any other defector would. Analysts say that what Hwang reveals could have great influence over future US approaches to the DPRK. "He could soothe us and tell us that the policies we've been following are correct, or he could give us information to show that we've been all wrong," Schuman quoted Daryl Plunk, a fellow at the Heritage Foundation in Washington, as saying. "This could be the most significant development in years." Hwang is a member of the Secretariat of the DPRK's ruling Workers Party and an architect of its "juche" self-reliance ideology. DPRK watchers, like the Kremlinologists of old, are drooling at the prospect of tapping Hwang's knowledge, Schuman wrote. Based on letters supposedly passed from Hwang to individuals in the ROK -- excerpts of which were printed in ROK newspapers -- analysts speculate that Hwang had been pushing for economic reform, but found his efforts going nowhere. Political analysts say that Hwang may have defected in an attempt to jolt the standoff on the Korean peninsula and create some positive progress in relations between the North and South, or perhaps saw his defection as the best way to encourage the domestic changes he wanted. "He thinks that Kim Jong-il has abandoned juche," Schuman quoted a Western diplomat in Seoul as saying. "He wants to try to make a difference."

### **1d. Hwang Defection: US Government Statements**

Acting US State Department Spokesman Glyn Davies ("STATE DEPARTMENT NOON BRIEFING, FEB. 18," USIA Transcript, 2/19/97) said Tuesday that the US government welcomes as "positive" the statement released by the DPRK government acknowledging the defection of Hwang Jang-yop. "We hope the DPRK is willing to resolve the matter in a non-confrontational way," Davies said. Davies added that the US is not involved in negotiations over the matter, which can only be resolved by the governments of the ROK, DPRK and PRC. Davies confirmed that the US is in contact with the ROK and PRC, but refused further comment on "the substance of our diplomatic conversations." Davies denied that any US officials have been in direct contact with Hwang. Davies emphasized that the Hwang issue will not affect the decision to donate food assistance to the DPRK through the World Food Program.

US Defense Department Spokesman Ken Bacon ("PENTAGON SPOKESMAN'S BRIEFING, FEB. 18," USIA Transcript, 2/19/97) said Tuesday that the Hwang defection had not produced any unusual troop movements on either side of the Korean Demilitarized Zone. Bacon also said he was unaware of any requests by either the PRC or the ROK for military assistance.

### **2. US To Provide Food Aid to DPRK**

The US State Department ("STATE DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCES FOOD AID TO NORTH KOREA," USIA Transcript, 2/19/97) announced February 19 a US\$10 million donation of food aid assistance to the DPRK. Following is the full text of the statement issued by State Department Spokesman Nicholas Burns: "In response to an appeal from the United Nations World Food Program (WFP) and after consultation with the Republic of Korea and Japan, the United States Government has decided to provide humanitarian assistance in the amount of \$10 million for use in flood-related relief in North Korea. Flooding in 1995 and 1996 destroyed considerable farm land in the DPRK. This exacerbated North Korea's chronic food production shortfalls, resulting in widespread food shortages and malnutrition. The WFP estimates this year's shortage at 1.8-2.3 million metric tons, or nearly half of North Korean needs. The U.S. Government assistance will be in the form of PL 480 Title II Emergency Food Aid. Specifically, the U.S. Government will provide corn soy blend for children under age five as well as rice and corn for flood victims. The U.S. Government has chosen the WFP as the channel for this assistance because of the WFP's proven ability to monitor distribution to ensure that aid reaches those in need."

### **3. US Government Statement on Death of Deng Xiaoping**

US President Bill Clinton ("CLINTON STATEMENT ON THE DEATH OF DENG XIAOPING," USIA Transcript, 2/19/97) on February 19 issued a statement in response to the PRC's announcement earlier in the day of the death of aging leader Deng Xiaoping. Following is the text of President Clinton's statement: "I was saddened today to learn of the death of Deng Xiaoping, China's senior statesman. Over the past two decades, Mr. Deng was an extraordinary figure on the world stage and the driving force behind China's decision to normalize relations with the United States. His historic visit to our country in 1979 laid the foundation for the rapid expansion of relations and cooperation between China and the United States. Mr. Deng's long life spanned a century of turmoil, tribulation and remarkable change in China. He spurred China's historic economic reform program, which greatly improved living standards in China and modernized much of the nation. China today plays an important role in world affairs in no small part because of Mr. Deng's decision to open his country to the outside world. The continued emergence of China as a great power that is stable politically and open economically, that respects human rights and the rule of law, and that becomes a full partner in building a secure international order, is profoundly in America's interest -- and in the world's interest. I want to convey my personal condolences to China's President Jiang Zemin, to Mr. Deng's widow Zhuo Lin, and to the Chinese people."

## **II. Republic of Korea**

### **1a. Hwang Defection: DPRK Position**

The DPRK's de facto leader Kim Jong-il yesterday gave an indication of his willingness to allow Hwang Jang-yop, currently seeking asylum at the ROK Embassy in Beijing, to defect to the ROK. The DPRK's official news agency reported yesterday morning, "Our great leader Kim Jong-il has stated as in the lyrics of our revolutionary song, 'Cowards may go wherever they please. We, however, will keep the red flag of revolution until the end. We will move forward, holding the banner of *juche* even higher.'" The news is an indication of the DPRK's future policy towards handling Hwang's defection bid. The statement also confirmed in the name of the nation's highest leader the statements by a spokesman for the DPRK's Foreign Ministry who said Monday, "If secretary Hwang indeed sought asylum, it signifies his betrayal. It is our position to let betrayers go their own way." (Joong Ang Ilbo, "KIM JONG IL HINTS AT ALLOWING HWANG'S DEFECTION", Seoul, 02/19/97)

### **1b. Hwang Defection: PRC Position**

The PRC is hoping for and urging both Koreas to resolve secretary Hwang's request for defection to the ROK directly through political negotiations. If the two Koreas fail to resolve the matter, however, the PRC government hopes that the DPRK will reach a political compromise with the US. A spokesman for the PRC's Foreign Ministry said yesterday at a news briefing held in Beijing, "We are hoping that the countries involved will handle Hwang's defection objectively and reach a peaceful resolution through rational measures in order to maintain peace and stability on the Korean peninsula." The spokesman also stated, "The Chinese government did not receive any prior information from the DPRK about secretary Hwang's plans to stop by Beijing on his way home from Japan. Upon arrival in Beijing, Hwang stayed at the North Korean Embassy (which is out of China's jurisdiction) which prevented us from getting a precise grip on the situation." He added that the Chinese authorities are conducting appropriate investigations into matters related to secretary Hwang's defection. (Joong Ang Ilbo, "CHINA HOPING FOR BOTH KOREAS TO RESOLVE HWANG'S DEFECTION THROUGH DIALOGUE," Seoul, 02/19/97)

The ROK government decided yesterday to spur negotiations with the PRC based on a policy of bringing secretary Hwang Jang-yop to the ROK at the earliest possible date now that the DPRK has hinted at allowing his defection. Accordingly, Seoul plans to ask the PRC to officially confirm secretary Hwang's free will in his defection bid and will also urge the PRC government to begin

consultations on the specific procedures to bring him to the ROK. The ROK government also plans to tell Beijing that it would agree to allow the presence of DPRK officials in confirming Hwang's free will. Yoo Kwang-suk, head of Asia and Pacific affairs at the ROK Foreign Ministry, said, "In theory, North Korean officials may be present when Hwang confirms that it is his free will to defect to the South." (Joong Ang Ilbo, "GOVERNMENT TO ALLOW NORTH KOREA DIRECTLY CONFIRM HWANG'S INTENTION TO DEFECT TO THE SOUTH," Seoul, 02/19/97)

### **1c. Hwang Defection: Meeting with CIA Denied**

The ROK government Monday denied reports that US intelligence officials and a senior PRC Foreign Ministry official have met Hwang Jang-yop, the DPRK's Workers' Party secretary who is seeking asylum at the ROK consular office in Beijing. "I confirm such reports are totally groundless," said Ryu Kwang-suk, director general for Asia-Pacific affairs at the Foreign Ministry. ROK press reports said Monday that Hwang had said at a meeting with a US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) official that five to seven more high-level DPRK officials were in line to seek asylum. During the meeting, arranged right after Hwang reached the ROK consular office last Wednesday, he provided a list of the DPRK officials preparing to escape from the North, the reports said. Such reports followed a report Saturday by the Sankei Shimbun, a Japanese economic daily, that CIA officials have contacted Hwang in Beijing to discuss ways to transfer him to the ROK through a third country. Quoting sources close to Hwang's case, the daily said CIA officials also contacted ROK authorities in Beijing over his defection. ROK newspapers also reported that PRC Vice Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan met Hwang Sunday and confirmed his intention to defect to the South. Ryu of the ROK Foreign Ministry said such reports would be of no help to an early resolution of Hwang's case. His cautious attitude was apparently an attempt to mollify PRC anger over the way the ROK government and news media publicized the incident in its initial stages. ROK officials seem to be bracing themselves for long and low-profile consultations with the PRC on the Hwang case. (Korea Herald, "GOVERNMENT DENIES REPORTS ON CIA-HWANG MEETING," Seoul, 02/18/97)

## **2. Shooting of Past DPRK Defector**

Police yesterday examined several fingerprints and strands of hair collected at the foyer of the Pudang apartment building where Lee Han-young, nephew of DPRK leader Kim Jong-il's estranged first wife, was shot and critically wounded Saturday night. Investigators said they were also looking into several phone calls inquiring about Lee on the day of the shooting as well as a dozen phone numbers entered into Lee's pager. Concrete material evidence identifying the attackers has yet to be found, police said. However, police said circumstantial and other evidence suggested the shooting was the handiwork of at least three well-trained DPRK agents. Lee, who suffered a gunshot wound to the head, has been declared brain dead and could die within the next two to three days, doctors at the Cha Hospital said. Quoting witnesses, police said two men attacked Lee, 36, with a pistol as he was about to ring the bell of a friend's apartment on the 14th floor. After the shooting, the two men are believed to have joined a third man waiting in a car at a basement garage, police said. A neighbor at the apartment in Pundang, located on the southern outskirts of Seoul, told police he saw three strangers in a car at the basement garage Saturday night. Police said the attackers might at first have attempted to kidnap Lee, but shot him after he resisted fiercely and then ran away. Lee's wife, Kim Jong-un, said Lee was concerned about possible DPRK terrorism against him, especially after the news report last February that his aunt, Sung Hye-rim, and mother, Hye-rang, were reportedly trying to defect to the West from a Moscow apartment. Lee's defection here was belatedly made public at that time. Because of his ties with Kim Jong-il, Lee's defection here remained unknown for almost 14 years. A government official said there are more than 90 such DPRK defectors, whose defection to the South remains undisclosed to protect them from terrorist retaliation. Police and the military stepped up security for other defectors and major government

facilities and foreign embassies. (Korea Herald, "EVIDENCE LINKS THREE AGENTS TO SHOOTING OF LEE POLICE," Lee Sung-yul, 02/18/97)

With government officials saying that the shooting of Lee Han-young is believed to be an act of terrorism by DPRK agents, public attention has been drawn to the state of DPRK spies here. The key point of the public's inquiry on the state of terrorism in the ROK appears to be how many DPRK agents are active in the South and to what extent. As to the actual number, a wide gap exists between the estimated figures given by security authorities and those reportedly given by apparent defector Hwang Jang-yop. The nation's intelligence officials estimate that there are between 500 and 1,000 resident DPRK spies, or "kochong kanchop," active in ROK. But Hwang, a foreign-affairs secretary of the DPRK's Workers Party who is now seeking political asylum in ROK, said that the figure is 50 times greater. If Hwang's allegation is true, the nation's security must have a considerable gap which can put the country in danger, security officials said. Security experts say that if 0.1 percent of the total population in society consists of enemy spies, the country could be toppled without fighting a bloody war. But security officials say that the figure given by Hwang may refer to all of the ROK's left-wing elements, most of whom are merely followers of socialism and not professional agents. Intelligence authorities estimate that there are some 40,000 pro-Pyongyang elements in ROK, 10,000 leftists, including up to 1,000 agents, and 30,000 socialism followers. Hwang made another shocking allegation by saying that some DPRK spies are deeply rooted in ROK society, further alarming security officials. (Korea Herald, "DPRK Spying in South Spotlighted by Shooting," Jun Kwan-woo, 02/18/97)

### **3. ROK Still Supports Peace Talks**

ROK Foreign Minister Yoo Chong-ha pledged yesterday that the ROK will continue efforts to realize the proposed four-party talks on a permanent Korean peace, despite an escalating standoff between the ROK and the DRPK over the apparent defection of DPRK Workers' Party Secretary and longtime ideologue Hwang Jang-yop. "We believe the four-party talks should be realized to manage the volatile situation and maintain peace on the Korean Peninsula," Yoo said in opening remarks to an annual conference of overseas diplomatic mission heads. Yoo said the defection by Hwang is only the beginning of the DPRK's problems, making peace all the more necessary. "Under the current circumstances, it is the most pressing task to establish peace on the Korean Peninsula," the minister said. He urged the more than 100 heads of overseas diplomatic missions to step up activities to help ensure the success of the four-party meeting initiative. Yoo also reaffirmed the ROK's determination to block the planned nuclear waste shipment from Taiwan to the DRPK. (Korea Herald, "Yoo Says Seoul Will Not Drop Four-Way Plan ," Seoul, 02/18/97)

### **4. DPRK-Taiwan Nuclear Waste Deal**

The ROK and the US have agreed to cooperate in the United Nations and other international forums to take measures against Taiwan's planned shipments of nuclear waste to the DPRK. The agreement was reached Monday in a meeting between Suh Dae-won, Director-General of the UN Systems Bureau section of the ROK Foreign Ministry, and Princeton Lyman, acting US Assistant Secretary of State for International Organizations. In the meeting, Lyman focused his comments chiefly on the US position on new UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's restructuring plan and the world body's financial situation, an official said. (Korea Herald, "Korea, United States to Join Hands against Nuclear Shipments by Taiwan," Seoul, 02/19/97)

The DPRK has recently sent a letter to Taiwan Power Co., requesting that the planned shipment of nuclear waste from Taiwan to the DPRK be postponed, according to the ROK environmental group Green Korea. The group said yesterday that it received via fax an article from Taiwan's English-language newspaper, China News, which reported the request by Pyongyang. The DPRK called for

the postponement while observing that the controversial plan to import nuclear waste from Taiwan was contributing to the heightening tension in the Northeast Asian region, the group quoted the report as saying. The DPRK letter, however, did not mention whether Pyongyang would repeal the contract with Taiwan. The Taiwanese paper reported that the latest move by Pyongyang came as international environmental groups intensified their pressure opposing the transfer. Following the DPRK move, the Taiwanese power company is considering delaying the submission of a request for export permission from Taiwanese nuclear authorities. The Taiwanese paper also reported that the Taipei government will send a delegation to the International Atomic Energy Agency Friday to explain its position on the question of exporting nuclear waste to the DPRK. (Korea Herald, "North Korea Asks Taiwan to Postpone Nuclear-Waste Shipment," 02/19/97)

## **5. Muted Kim Jong-il Birthday Celebration**

Keeping behind closed doors any political fallout over the apparent defection of Hwang Jang-yop, the DPRK marked the 55th birthday of its de facto leader Kim Jong-il Sunday. The gala for the leader, who has yet to assume the additional titles of state president and chairman of the Party's Central People's Committee, was characterized by considerable pomp, suggesting a "labor of loyalty" by the people of the impoverished North. This birthday is different since it marks the end of Kim Jong-il's three-year mourning period for his late father, Kim Il-sung. DPRK watchers forecast the junior Kim will formally ascend to power soon. However, no new visions for the coming Kim Jong-il era were forthcoming. Although the mourning period officially ends in July, the North's worsening economic plight hardly leaves the Pyongyang regime in a position to develop new policies, analysts said. In a meeting held Saturday at Pyongyang's April 25 Cultural Hall, the most watched-for event surrounding the junior Kim's birthday, he was constantly referred to as "the leader" successfully implementing "'our style' socialism." "We should further consolidate the foundation of our socialism arming ourselves with (Kim Jong-il's) Red Banner ideology," Party Secretary Kim Ki-nam said during a one hour-and-40-minute nationally televised meeting. DPRK watchers at the Ministry of National Unification noted that during that meeting and in other events, the junior Kim was repeatedly hailed as "the leader." In titles, the deceased Kim and the junior Kim have been described as the "great leader" and the "dear leader," respectively. In ideology, the late senior Kim had been the epitome of "juche" ideology; the younger Kim has been slowly building his own version of the juche ideology, called the Red Banner ideology, analysts said. One explanation given by DPRK analysts of the motive for Secretary Hwang Jang-yop's apparent defection is that Hwang, who had been a key architect of the juche ideology, was facing the prospect of being ousted by the new regime embracing Red Banner ideology as its foundation. (Korea Herald, "Pomp, But No Visions in Gala for Kim Jong-il Birthday," Kim Ji-soo, 02/18/97)

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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](#).

Wade Huntley: [napsnet@nautilus.org](mailto:napsnet@nautilus.org)  
Berkeley, California, United States

Choi Chung-moon: [cily@star.elim.net](mailto:cily@star.elim.net)  
Seoul, Republic of Korea



Peter Razvin: [icipu@glas.apc.org](mailto:icipu@glas.apc.org)  
Moscow, Russian Federation

Chunsi Wu: [dlshen@fudan.ihep.ac.cn](mailto:dlshen@fudan.ihep.ac.cn)  
Shanghai, People's Republic of China

Dingli Shen: [dlshen@fudan.ihep.ac.cn](mailto:dlshen@fudan.ihep.ac.cn)  
Shanghai, People's Republic of China

Hiroyasu Akutsu: [akutsu@glocomnet.or.jp](mailto:akutsu@glocomnet.or.jp)  
Tokyo, Japan

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Wade Huntley: [napsnet@nautilus.org](mailto:napsnet@nautilus.org)  
Berkeley, California, United States

Choi Chung-moon: [cily@star.elim.net](mailto:cily@star.elim.net)  
Seoul, Republic of Korea

Peter Razvin: [icipu@glas.apc.org](mailto:icipu@glas.apc.org)  
Moscow, Russian Federation

Chunsi Wu: [dlshen@fudan.ihep.ac.cn](mailto:dlshen@fudan.ihep.ac.cn)  
Shanghai, People's Republic of China

Dingli Shen: [dlshen@fudan.ihep.ac.cn](mailto:dlshen@fudan.ihep.ac.cn)  
Shanghai, People's Republic of China

Hiroyasu Akutsu: [akutsu@glocomnet.or.jp](mailto:akutsu@glocomnet.or.jp)  
Tokyo, Japan

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Nautilus Institute

2342 Shattuck Ave. #300, Berkeley, CA 94704 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email:

[nautilus@nautilus.org](mailto:nautilus@nautilus.org)