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I. United States

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The Wall Street Journal Interactive Edition carried an editorial ("WHO PULLED PYONGYANG'S STRING?," 2/20/97) discussing the DPRK's apparent change in position regarding the evident defection of t

Note: there will be no Daily Report for Friday, February 21. The Daily Report will return on Monday, February 24.

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1b. Hwang Defection: Wall Street Journal Analysis

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2. Implications of Deng's Death for DPRK-PRC Relations

Reuters ("POST-DENG ERA: LITTLE COMFORT TO N. KOREA," Tokyo, 2/20/97) reported that a number of analysts said on Thursday that the death of PRC patriarch Deng Xiaoping is a symbolic loss to the DPRK's old-style communist leaders, cutting a key link to their past and perhaps even enhancing the position of moderates within the regime. In its handling of the apparent defection of Hwang Jang-yop, Beijing's need to balance interests in relations with the DPRK, its traditional ally, and the ROK, its new business partner, reflects a divergence between the PRC and the DPRK that has been many years in the making. Economically, the pragmatic market policies the PRC adopted under Deng in the 1980s diverged from the hard-line statist policies in the DPRK, which irritated Beijing by boasting of self-sufficiency while depending on PRC handouts and goods at cheap "friendship" prices. Politically, as a standard-bearer for world communism, the PRC was embarrassed by DPRK cult worship of state founder Kim Il-sung and by the planned dynastic succession to his son Kim Jong-il, the country's current de facto leader. Pyongyang likely can count even less on Beijing's forbearance in the post-Deng era, analysts said. "The death of Deng Xiaoping is bad news for North Korea, which had strong relations with China, particularly with senior Chinese military officials and bureaucrats who attached great importance to relations between the two

countries," said Terumasa Nakanishi, professor of international politics at Kyoto University. "Relations between China and North Korea were held together by a feeling of solidarity between old revolutionaries. Deng was about the last of those revolutionaries," said Nozomu Akizuki, professor of northeast Asian diplomacy at Tokyo's Meiji Gakuin University. "Chinese President Jiang Zemin, who decided to establish diplomatic relations with South Korea, apparently does not like North Korea very much," said Noriyuki Suzuki, a North Korea analyst at Tokyo-based Radiopress news service. Many observers say Beijing dreads the outright collapse of the DPRK, for the chaos and the tide of refugees it would unleash along the PRC's borders and especially for the loss of PRC influence on the Korean peninsula. To preserve that influence and help keep the DPRK intact, the PRC is likely to back Pyongyang's reformers such as Hwang against its military hard-liners, said Katsumi Sato, director of the Modern Korea Institute. "China supports the status quo, and fears that a hard-line military government would be inept at governing the country and resort to war," he said. "A war against South Korea would be won by the South and the United States, removing Chinese influence."

3. ROK To Send Food Aid to DPRK

The Associated Press ("S. KOREA TO GIVE NORTH FOOD AID," Seoul, 2/20/97) reported that the ROK government announced Thursday that, in response to the appeal of the UN World Food Program, it will donate US\$6 million in emergency food aid to impoverished DPRK. The ROK made the pledge despite mounting tension between the two Koreas. The US\$6 million is twice the amount the ROK provided to the DPRK in food aid last year. The ROK Unification Ministry, which is in charge of DPRK affairs, said in a statement, "The government plans to participate, from a humanitarian point of view." How the money will be spent will be decided later with UN officials, the statement said. The Rome-based World Food Program issued its appeal earlier this month -- the third in a year -- for 110,000 tons of grain worth US\$41 million. The US on Wednesday announced that it will provide US\$10 million. UN officials working in the DPRK warn that the country will face exhaustion of its food supplies this spring unless it receives large-scale food aid.

4. Analysis of DPRK Food Aid Issue

Robert A. Manning and James Przystup wrote in an opinion editorial for The Washington Post ("FEED ME OR I'LL KILL YOU," 2/20/97, A23) criticizing a previous opinion editorial by Andrew Natsios carried on February 9. [Ed. note: Please see "Food Aid to DPRK" in the US section of the February 10 Daily Report for a summary of Natsios's editorial.] The authors wrote that Natsios's opinion piece, and the companion Post editorial in the same issue, "are good illustrations of the unfortunate reality that we should have learned from our Somalia experience: There is rarely such a thing as a purely humanitarian problem. This is especially so in the case of North Korea, a country with which we are still technically at war." The authors argued that the DPRK food crisis is uniquely rooted in the failure of its totalitarian economy and government, and is therefore chronic. "The issue is not just the present emergency but a long-term dilemma of how to deal with a failing state that threatens vital American interests. Unlike starving Angolans and Sudanese, whom we fed, North Korea literally has a gun at our head even as it begs for relief," the authors wrote. The authors added that "food is fungible," meaning there is no way to prevent aid to feed civilians from freeing resources to be diverted to the military. The authors also noted that the DPRK seems to have little regard for its own people, exemplified by its deal to accept Taiwanese nuclear waste. "Pyongyang itself has not only politicized food aid but outright lied about it," the authors claimed, pointing to the DPRK's blaming of the US for collapsed talks with Cargill Corp. over a major grain purchase deal earlier this year. The authors concluded that, while "some emergency food may be necessary," the US and other countries should not extend large scale aid indefinitely unless the DPRK begins to make the economic and political reforms that would prevent future food crises as well as improve political relations. "Of course starving people should be fed. But it is naive and wrong-headed not to

understand the politics of food aid. Generous economic help for North Korea should be forthcoming to the degree it reduces its military threat and opens its economy. Pyongyang should be offered the choice of keeping its gun or its tin cup. But to allow it to have both is sheer folly." [Ed. note: Robert A. Manning, a former State Department advisor on Asia policy, is a senior fellow at the Progressive Policy Institute. James Przystup, a former member of the State and Defense policy planning staffs, directs Asian studies at the Heritage Foundation.]

II. Republic of Korea

1. Hwang Defection

PRC government officials have shown optimistic signs that DPRK defector Hwang Jang-yop may fly to Seoul after the funeral of the late leader, Deng Xiaoping. The report by the PRC's state-controlled media on Wednesday, revealing for the first time that Hwang Jang-yop is seeking asylum at the ROK's consulate in Beijing, is seen as "an optimistic sign" that the PRC will allow Hwang to leave, said Lee Ho, a chief analyst at the ROK Unification Ministry. Hwang Jang-yop's departure for Seoul may have to wait until after Deng's funeral, tentatively scheduled for next week. The PRC has hesitated to allow Hwang to travel to Seoul for fear of angering the DPRK, a longtime socialist ally on whose side it fought in the Korean War. At the same time however, the PRC also does not want to jeopardize its growing trade relations with the ROK. (Korea Times, "HWANG MAY FLY TO SEOUL AFTER DENG'S FUNERAL," Seoul, 02/20/97)

The Nihon Keizai, a Japanese journal, quoted a top DPRK negotiator on Wednesday as saying that the DPRK has decided to allow Hwang Jang-yop's defection to the ROK. Kim Jong-u, the vice chairman of the DPRK's external economic affairs commission, revealed the North's position on Hwang when he met with the Japanese investment firm executive Tomoo Hayakawa and other international organization officials in Beijing, the journal said. "Betraying the people when the country is in trouble is very regrettable and unforgivable," Kim reportedly said. "[The DPRK] will not interfere [with Hwang's defection] and will not chase after him because he is old." Blasting Hwang as "outdated," Kim said that the former Workers' Party secretary is not a reformer and that his "juche" (self-reliance) ideology is far behind the times. (Korea Times, "NK TO LET HWANG DEFECT TO SOUTH, NIHON KEIZAI ," 02/20/97)

2. Shooting of Past DPRK Defector

It is suspected that DPRK defector Lee Han-young was shot by the Russian Mafia. "We do not rule out the possible involvement of Russian businessmen who had debt problems with Lee or their hired Russian Mafia gangsters," a senior police official said. The possibility of the Russian Mafia's involvement could spell a change in direction of the police investigation. Previously, police investigators have pointed to DPRK agents as the prime suspects. Lee's wife reportedly said that Lee had dealings with Russian traders from early 1994 and had moved to Pusan for business purposes last year. While running the business, Lee had been jailed there for failing to pay debts and frequently changed addresses, perhaps to evade creditor Russian businessmen. Police emphasized that Czech-made bullets and a Browning pistol, the alleged weapons used in attacking Lee, are easily available to Russians. Police had earlier linked the shooting case to the recent asylum bid of Hwang Jang-yop, believing that the Pyongyang government may have held a grudge against defector Lee, a nephew of DPRK de-facto leader Kim Jong-il's former wife. Sustaining a serious gunshot wound to his head, Lee now remains brain-dead at a hospital near Seoul. (Korea Herald, "THE POSSIBILITY OF THE RUSSIAN MAFIA'S INVOLVEMENT COULD SPELL A CHANGE IN DIRECTION OF THE POLICE INVESTIGATION", Seoul, 02/20/97)

3. ROK To Send Food Aid to DPRK

The ROK government announced Thursday that it will approve US\$6 million in food aid to the DPRK through the United Nations World Food Program (WFP). ROK Unification Ministry spokesman Kang Ho-yang said the WFP recently revealed its plan to secure US\$41.6 million in relief to the DPRK and asked for the ROK's participation. "We decided to take part in it on humanitarian grounds. The amount of our aid will be about \$6 million and the timing and contents of the assistance will be decided in consultation with the US organization," said Kang. He added however, that the ROK government's basic position remains that any large-scale government-level food assistance can be considered only if the DPRK officially requests it or when Pyongyang participates in the four-party talks on Korean security affairs. The US\$6 million package is twice as much as Seoul's assistance package to the DPRK last year. Insiders say the decision to provide the aid was intended to prevent inter-Korean tension from worsening amid DPRK official Hwang Jang-yop's defection and to resolve Hwang's case smoothly. The US announced Thursday that it would donate US\$10 million in assistance to the DPRK. Japan, on the other hand, said it will wait until March or April when the UN Department of Humanitarian Aid and US Development Program start a joint DPRK aid campaign. (Korea Times, "SEOUL ANNOUNCES \$6 MIL. FOOD AID TO PYONGANG THRU UN PROGRAM," Seoul, 02/20/97)

4. DPRK Attendance of Four-Party Talks Briefing

The ROK's Ambassador to Washington Park Kun-woo yesterday expressed optimism that the DPRK will soon attend a briefing by the ROK and the US on four-way peace talks. "It's difficult to predict when, but I believe North Koreans will come to the briefing, considering the internal problems the North is facing," he told reporters. Park believes that a "sense of crisis seems to be present among DPRK leaders. They think that their regime cannot persist without receiving outside help this year." His remarks support the view that a DPRK delegate will sit down with ROK and US officials in New York as early as March after Seoul and Washington make announcements on the resumption of food aid to the DPRK. The DPRK has postponed the briefing on two earlier occasions, blaming US delays on grain shipments. Park rejected the view that Seoul is being alienated by the improvement of ties between Washington and Pyongyang. He said it is natural that the ROK and the US have some differences in handling the DPRK but coordination between the two allies is on a satisfactory level. The ambassador said the ROK needs to be more active in accepting reasonable US requests and more resolute in countering unacceptable demands. (Korea Herald, "NORTH KOREA WILL SOON ATTEND 4-WAY TALKS BRIEFING:AMB. PARK," Seoul, 02/20/97)

III. People's Republic of China

1. Hwang Defection

China Daily ("CHINA CALLS FOR CALM IN KOREA ISSUE," A2, 2/14/97) reported that the PRC called for calm in dealing with DPRK official Hwang Jang-yop's presence in the ROK Embassy in Beijing. PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Tang Guoqiang made the remark on February 13 when asked to confirm the report that Hwang Jang-yop got into the ROK Embassy in Beijing during his transit in Beijing. "It is hoped that the parties concerned will proceed from the overall interests and treat the matter calmly and handle it properly so as to safeguard peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula," he said.

2. PRC-ROK Meeting

Jie Fang Daily ("QIAN CALLS FOR PEACE ON KOREAN PENINSULA," Singapore," A4, 2/15/97) reported that PRC Foreign Minister Qian Qichen, who is in Singapore for an Asian and European foreign minister meeting, met with his South Korean counterpart Yoo Chong-ha on February 14. During the meeting, Qian said that the PRC always stands for peace and stability on the Korean

peninsula. Although some twists and turns have created a few problems there, he said it is the PRC's hope that the situation on the peninsula will continue to be stable. He expressed the hope that the parties concerned will make unflinching efforts toward this end.

3. DPRK-Japan Relations

If the international community allows Japan to be a permanent member of the UN Security Council (UNSC), it will encourage Japan to revive its criminal past, a spokesman for the DPRK Foreign Ministry said on February 14, People's Daily ("DPRK OPPOSE JAPAN TO BE A PERMANENT MEMBER OF UNSC," Pyongyang, A3, 2/16/97) reported. According to the DPRK's Rodong Shinmun, the DPRK spokesman expressed serious concerns over Japan's activities to win a permanent membership of the UNSC, meaning it should not be exchanged with money. The added membership should be firstly assigned to a nonaligned and developing country, he said.

4. US Radioactive Bullets Incident: PRC Opinion

The cover-up by the US and Japanese governments of the use of radioactive bullets by US marines during a training exercise in Japan more than a year ago cannot but arouse the public's suspicion over the US-Japanese security treaty system, a People's Daily article said on February 14. The signed article said people could not help suspecting that the US-Japanese Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security, revised last year, is really, as Japan claimed, not "offensive," and wondering whether there are other prohibited weapons hidden in US military bases in Japan. The article said it is unusual that the incident was made public by the media, other than through official channels of the two countries. It described Washington's explanation, that the bullets were used by mistake because they were mislabeled, as an excuse, saying the true reason is that the US administration wants to use radioactive bullets without public notice. People's Daily ("US RADIOACTIVE BULLETS IN JAPAN RAISE SUSPICIONS," A6, 2/14/97)

5. US Secretary of State World Tour

The upcoming visit by US Secretary Madeleine Albright will be conducive to promoting mutual understanding and the further improvement of Sino-US relations, PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Tang Guoqiang said in Beijing on February 18. At the regular press conference, the spokesman announced that the new US Secretary of State will visit the PRC on February 24 and 25. Tang said Albright's main purpose is to get acquainted with PRC leaders and exchange views on bilateral relations. China Daily ("ALBRIGHT SCHEDULES OFFICIAL VISIT TO CHINA," A1, 2/19/97)

A commentary in Wen Hui Daily ("LOOKING FOR A NEW BALANCE," Washington, A4, 2/17/97) said that US Secretary of State Albright's visit to nine European and Asian countries has special meaning. The commentary said that Secretary Albright changed a US diplomatic tradition, under which a US secretary of state will visit its European allies, such as Britain, France and Germany, in the first overseas trip. This time, Albright, in addition to those countries, will also visit Russia and Asian countries including Japan, the ROK and the PRC. The commentary said that Albright is trying to draw attention to relations with Asian countries, indicating that the US is finding a diplomatic balance between Europe and Asia.

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

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Produced by [the Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainable Development](#).

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