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I. United States

1. US Arms Sales to ROK

Reuters ("PENTAGON TO SELL MISSILE LAUNCHER TO S.KOREA," Washington, 10/20/97) reported that the US Defense Department on Monday said that it plans to sell the ROK government one MK 41 shipboard missile launcher system for an estimated US\$90 million. "This proposed sale would contribute to the foreign policy and national security of the United States by helping to improve the security of a friendly country which has been and continues to be an important force for political stability and economic progress in Northeast Asia," the department said in a statement. The department added that the proposed sale of the missile launch system would not affect the basic military balance in the region and there would be no adverse impact on US defense readiness as a result of the sale. The ROK is expected to buy several more of the systems, the department said.

2. DPRK Abduction of ROK Citizens

Reuters ("NORTH KOREA RELEASES FARMERS SEIZED IN DMZ," Seoul, 10/21/97), United Press International ("NORTH RETURNS SEIZED S.KOREA FARMERS," Seoul, 10/21/97), and the AP-Dow Jones News Service ("NORTH KOREA RELEASES TWO S. KOREAN FARMERS," Seoul, 10/21/97)

reported that a spokesman for the UN command said that representatives from the DPRK People's Army (KPA) on Tuesday released two ROK farmers abducted last week in the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). The two ROK citizens were handed over to United Nations Command (UNC) officials at the truce village of Panmunjom, the spokesman said. UNC and KPA officials met earlier Tuesday at the site of the incident, where the two farmers admitted accidentally crossing into DPRK territory to pick acorns. The UNC said the trespassing happened along a part of the DMZ that is not clearly marked.

3. US Food Aid for DPRK

US State Department spokesman James Rubin ("RUBIN ON U.S. ASSISTANCE TO THE DPRK ON FOOD AID," USIA Text, 10/20/97) announced in a statement: "A U.S. Government food needs and aid assessment team will travel through the DPRK from October 25 to November 4. The seven person team will examine both need and transparency issues. USAID [US Agency for International Development], the Department of State, the centers for Disease Control, and other agencies will be represented. All U.S. assistance to the DPRK is provided on a humanitarian basis. We have always regarded monitoring as crucial to this program. The monitoring system of the World Food Program, while not ideal, has ensured that there has been no significant diversion of American food aid. Nevertheless, we are seeking greater transparency with respect to distribution and assessment of need. The team will consult with DPRK officials and World Food Program representatives to strengthen the system. The food situation in North Korea remains serious, and the U.S. Government recently announced the provision of \$5 million in medical assistance to the DPRK through UNICEF. The report of this team will help the U.S. Government better understand the situation. The final travel schedule has not yet been confirmed."

US State Department spokesman James Rubin ("STATE DEPARTMENT NOON BRIEFING, OCTOBER 20, 1997," USIA Transcript, 10/20/97) stated that the team being sent to the DPRK to assess the famine is the first such visit from the US. He said that the team will likely engage in "further consultations" with DPRK officials about the system for monitoring food aid, although he added that "some of the acute concerns that were expressed [by the US] have been worked through." Rubin stated that he had no information on whether the assessment team would be able to visit all areas of the DPRK. Rubin said that "it is better when North Korea opens its system up to observation and better understanding. The more that people in that country are willing to allow our officials, as well as independent journalists, to learn what's happening there, we think the situation is better." He added that the "skewed application of resources [by the DPRK government] is causing the deaths and suffering for a lot of innocent people." Regarding the remains of a can of donated food found on the DPRK submarine which ran aground off the coast of the ROK in September of last year, Rubin pointed out that the can was not part of any US government assistance to the DPRK, adding, "There is no evidence still of diversion of food donated by the U.S. Government -- no significant diversion -- through the programs that are run by the World Food Program."

The Associated Press ("NORTH KOREA AGREES TO ADMIT 10 MORE FOOD RELIEF MONITORS," reported that anonymous US officials said Monday that the DPRK has agreed to admit 10 additional monitors to ensure that food contributions go to children and others in dire need. Seven monitors have been overseeing distribution, but if the US decides to increase its contribution more monitors would be needed, said the officials.

4. DPRK Famine

Agence France-Presse (Tani Freedman, "FOOD RELIEF IS GETTING TO N. KOREAN CHILDREN, U.N. SAYS," Geneva, 10/21/97) reported that Douglas Coutts, UN World Food Program (WFP) director for the DPRK, said that DPRK children being assisted by the WFP are showing "a definite

improvement in the nutritional status since food (distribution) began on a sustained basis in May." UNICEF special representative in the DPRK Omawale Omawale warned however that the improvement is "not sustainable unless we deal with the health situation and sanitation." Omawale said that people are dying from disease rather than because of hunger, and that even if food were available in abundance "the problems would not stop," if the lack of basic medicines and untreated water were not dealt with.

5. US MIAs from Korean War

The Associated Press (Robert Burns, "N KOREA WARNED GUESTS TO COOPERATE," Washington, 10/20/97) reported that Pat Dunton, president of the Korean War-Cold War Family Association of the Missing, said Monday that DPRK authorities threatened to block further cooperation on Korean War POW-MIA issues if representatives of veterans' groups reported negatively on their trip there last week. Among those who made such threats was Ambassador Kim Byong-hong, the head DPRK official on MIA-POW issues, Dunton said. Other members of the US delegation, including a Defense Department official, confirmed her account. Dunton also said that the DPRK officials sidestepped or ignored questions she and the other representatives raised about accounting for missing US soldiers, including refusing to discuss the possibility of giving the delegates access to four US defectors living in the DPRK. Greg Man, a Defense Department official who accompanied the delegates on their visit, said Monday that the DPRK officials agreed to pass along written questions from the delegates to the defectors. Meanwhile Ken Steadman, head of the Washington office of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, said that he was encouraged that the DPRK officials at least indicated that they wanted to increase the number of joint recovery operations in the coming years. After the delegates left, diggers found one set of remains believed to be those of a US soldier. [Ed. note: See "US MIAs from Korean War" in the US Section of the October 10 Daily Report.]

6. ROK Elections

The Wall Street Journal Interactive Edition ("SOUTH KOREA POSTPONES PROBE INTO OPPOSITION LEADER KIM," 10/21/97) reported that ROK Prosecutor General Kim Tae-jung Tuesday said that he will postpone investigations into allegations that presidential candidate Kim Dae-jung operated an illegal slush fund until after the December 18 presidential election to "prevent a division in national opinion" toward political parties. He also said that the decision was made to help the troubled local financial markets, which have been disrupted by political turmoil. The prosecutor went on to say that it would be "technically impossible to complete the investigation before the election."

7. US-PRC Nuclear Cooperation

The Wall Street Journal (Kathy Chen, "CHINA IS OPTIMISTIC ABOUT ODDS FOR NUCLEAR-ENERGY AGREEMENT," Beijing, 10/21/97) reported that an unnamed PRC official said Monday that the PRC is confident it will reach an agreement at the coming summit with the US that will allow the Clinton administration to activate an accord to export US nuclear-energy technology to the PRC. A senior official of the US embassy in Beijing said Monday that the PRC has taken several "positive" steps to show that it is meeting regulations aimed at blocking the proliferation of nuclear weapons. He stated, however, the PRC still needs to sign a written guarantee pledging not to engage in military or peaceful nuclear cooperation with Iran. The PRC official said that also on the agenda for the Clinton-Jiang summit. Are accords on scientific and environmental cooperation, as well as setting up a hotline between the two presidents.

The AP-Dow Jones News Service ("CHINA, U.S. HOLD NUCLEAR TALKS AHEAD OF STATE VISIT," Beijing, 10/21/97) reported that the PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Shen Guofang denied Tuesday

that the PRC has ever transferred nuclear technology to Iran. Meanwhile US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Robert Einhorn and PRC officials on Tuesday resumed negotiations on nuclear non-proliferation issues. US Embassy spokesman Bill Palmer said Einhorn would stay in Beijing as long as needed to reach an agreement.

8. Pending Congressional Action on PRC

The Washington Post (John E. Yang, "HOUSE VOTE ON CHINA STANCE UNLIKELY BEFORE JIANG VISIT," Washington, 10/21/97, A16) reported that Christina Martin, press secretary to US House of Representatives Speaker Newt Gingrich, said Monday that the House is not likely to act on a package of legislation intended to toughen the US stance toward the PRC until early next month, after PRC President Jiang Zemin has completed his visit to the US.

9. Nuclear Test Ban

The AP-Dow Jones News ("CLINTON ADMINISTRATION RENEWS NUCLEAR TEST BAN DRIVE," Washington, 10/21/97) reported that Robert Bell, the arms control policy director at the US National Security Council, said that the Clinton administration supports the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty to ban nuclear weapons testing despite its limitations. "We're making no claim that the CTB will prevent nuclear proliferation or prevent countries from acquiring nuclear capability," Bell said, but he added that the ban will make it more difficult for non-nuclear powers to field viable nuclear weapons and for nuclear-capable countries to develop new types of weapons. The Senate Governmental Affairs Subcommittee on International Security and Proliferation plans a hearing next Monday on problems of managing the US nuclear stockpile without actual explosive tests. The following Wednesday, the Senate Appropriations energy and water subcommittee will hold a hearing on the treaty. Hearings before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee are not expected until next year.

The New York Times (William J. Broad, "SCIENTISTS SAY TREMOR IN RUSSIA WAS NOT CAUSED BY NUCLEAR BLAST," 10/21/97) reported that US scientists criticized the federal government for saying that a seismic event in the Russian wilderness two months ago might have been an underground nuclear blast. [Ed. note: See "Russian 'Seismic Event'" in the US Section of the September 4 Daily Report.] The scientists said that the tremor was unquestionably natural in origin, and they suggested that bureaucratic foes of the nuclear test ban treaty are distorting the truth in a bid to torpedo the treaty's ratification in the Senate. "This test scare should be investigated by Congress and the president," Dr. Jeremy Stone, president of the Federation of American Scientists, said on Monday. Dr. Lynn Sykes, a seismologist at the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory of Columbia University and an authority on detecting nuclear blasts with sensitive instruments that monitor ground vibrations, said he had canvassed his peers around the world and could find none who believed the event was nuclear. On Monday, an anonymous intelligence official said, "We haven't reached a conclusion on whether that event was an explosion or an earthquake. The data is rather ambiguous." However, a civilian scientist recently briefed by the CIA on the event accused the agency of failing to retract early assessments when accumulating evidence all but ruled out a blast. Meanwhile Frank Gaffney, Jr., a former Pentagon official in the Reagan administration who now directs the Center for Security Policy, a private Washington group that opposes the nuclear test ban, said, "I believe there is compelling circumstantial evidence to suggest this was a nuclear test."

10. Global Land Mine Ban

The Los Angeles Times ("JAPAN TO SIGN LAND MINE TREATY SOON," Tokyo, 10/21/97) reported that an anonymous Japanese Foreign Ministry official said Tuesday that Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto announced that Japan will move to sign the global land mine treaty soon.

However, the official added that before Hashimoto's decision is finally endorsed by the Cabinet, Japan must find alternatives to land mines and study ways to comply with the agreement under the US-Japan bilateral security alliance. The ministry official did not say when final Cabinet approval was expected. [Ed. note: See "Global Land Mine Ban," in the US section of the October 16 Daily Report.]

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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