NAPSNet Daily Report 25 March, 2003

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 25 March, 2003", NAPSNet Daily Report, March 25, 2003, https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-25-march-2003/

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I. United States

1. Northeast Asia Alliances

The Washington Post (Doug Struck, "ALLIANCES SHIFTING IN NORTHEAST ASIA ANALYSTS PREDICT LOSS OF US INFLUENCE, ESPECIALLY ON KOREAN PENINSULA," Tokyo, 04/23/03) reported that while the US has been preoccupied with Iraq, a shuffling of alliances is taking place in Northeast Asia, accelerated by the US failure to defuse the DPRK nuclear crisis, according to

government officials and analysts. The result is likely to be a crumbling of Cold War ties and a lessening of US power and prestige in a region where the US has held sway for 50 years, they said. The key shift is on the Korean Peninsula, where the ROK and their new government are increasingly unwilling to play the role of loyal supporter of the US. The result is a weakening of the two three-legged alliances that have defined relations in the region ever since the end of World War II: the US, Japan and ROK on one side, and Russia, the PRC and the DPRK on the other. "There is a reshuffling of relationships. One worrying symptom is the deterioration of the ROK-US relationship," said Yukio Okamoto, a private consultant and close adviser to Japan's prime minister, Junichiro Koizumi. The ROK anticipates a future with formal ties or even a loose union of some sort with the DPRK. And the ROK is steadily improving ties with the PRC and with Russia. Other political reorderings are undoing those old power blocs. The PRC and Russia now set their foreign policies on pragmatic terms, not ideology. The DPRK's ties to its former communist allies have become more strained as the PRC and Russia look disapprovingly at the DPRK's nuclear ambitions. Even Japan, while remaining the most determined ally of the US, is reaching out to old enemies. It forged a historic agreement with the DPRK last September with only cursory consultation with the US, and is improving relations with the PRC, the ROK and Russia.

2. ROK Parliament on ROK Role in US-Led War on Iraq

Agence France-Presse ("SOUTH KOREAN PARLIAMENT PUTS OFF VOTE ON SENDING TROOPS TO IRAQ," 03/25/03) reported that the ROK's parliament, fearing a public backlash, shelved a vote on sending troops to support US war efforts in Iraq as anti-war protests mounted here. ROK President Roh Moo-Hyun expressed regret, saying the dispatch of troops would have helped the ROK persuade the US to solve the DPRK nuclear crisis peacefully. Roh's proposal last week to contribute some 700 non-combatants to the war effort sparked criticism and a rising tide of anti-war protests. Newspaper surveys showed up to 80 percent of ROK citizens oppose the US-led attack on Iraq. "Both parties agreed to put off the vote," Chung Kyun-Hwan, floor leader of Roh's ruling Millennium Democratic Party (MDP), told reporters after the bill to send troops faced strong opposition from voters. The conservative opposition Grand National Party (GNP), which holds a majority in parliament, initially supported the president's pledge to dispatch troops. "Our party cannot go and take the blame for sending troops alone," GNP spokesman Suh Myong-Rim told AFP, adding Roh's proposal would be put to the assembly again next week. "If we send troops there, South Korea would be recorded as a war criminal in history," Kim Hong-Shin, a GNP member of poarliament, told a GNP meeting. The delay followed scuffles outside the National Assembly between riot police and hundreds of anti-war protesters. Police detained 26 radical students who broke into the National Assembly compound during the debate. Thousands of riot police had formed human barricades to block the protests by nuns, monks and civic group activists. The influential Korean Bar Association has ruled the war on Iraq illegal and the ROK's two umbrella labor groups, which have more than 1.6 million members, have threatened a general strike if the assembly approves Roh's decision. The Peoples Solidarity for Participatory Democracy, the most influential civic group in the ROK, threatened to sue against any move to send troops to Iraq, citing the constitution banning any war of aggression.

3. DPRK on US-Led War on Iraqi

The Associated Press ("NORTH KOREA WARNS OF `SECOND IRAQI CRISIS' ON KOREAN PENINSULA," Seoul, 03/25/03) reported that the DPRK on Tuesday claimed the US may attack the DPRK, sparking a "second Iraqi crisis." Labeled by US President George W. Bush as a part of an "axis of evil" with Iraq and Iran, the DPRK fears that it may be targeted after the US-led attack on Baghdad. It accuses the US of inciting the dispute over its suspected nuclear weapons programs to

create an excuse for invasion. "No one can vouch that the US will not spark the second Iraqi crisis on the Korean Peninsula," North Korea's state-run Minju Joson newspaper said. The DPR will "increase its national defense power on its own without the slightest vacillation no matter what others may say," the paper said. The DPRK said Monday that the US is using the war against Iraq as a test for military action against the DPRK. ROK President Roh Moo-hyun on Monday dismissed the allegation as "inaccurate and groundless." He said US officials have repeatedly pledged to resolve the issue peacefully. Early this month, Bush said he believed the standoff could be resolved diplomatically, but noted that it could be resolved militarily if diplomacy fails. Tensions between the ROK and the DPR have been mounting over the nuclear crisis. The DPRK suspended a meeting with the ROK this week after Seoul put its military on heightened alert amid fear that the DPRK might use the distraction of war in Iraq to attempt provocations. It said the ROK move pushed the situation to "the brink of war."

4. US on DPRK-ROK Talk Cancellations

Agence France-Presse ("US REGRETS NORTH KOREAN CANCELLATION OF NORTH KOREA-SOUTH KOREA TALKS," 03/24/03) reported that the US said it regretted the DPRK's decision to cancel talks this week with the ROK, describing them as a useful. The DPRK suspended the economic and maritime talks on Saturday, billing the move as retaliation for what it said was the ROK's high military state of alert as a US-led war erupted against Iraq. "We have always supported North-South dialogue. We think it's important to resolve the bilateral issues," said US State Department spokesman Richard Boucher. "It's a good channel to make clear to the North Koreans that they must end their nuclear arms program. So we find the North cancellation of the talks scheduled for later this week regrettable." The DPRK's chief delegate to the inter-Korean economic cooperation committee, Pak Chang-Ryon, said in a statement that the DPRK had to postpone indefinitely, two meetings scheduled for the coming week. He accused the ROK of putting its military on a high alert posture against the DPRK "under the pretext of the Iraqi war," according to the DPRK's Korean Central News Agency.

5. US on DPRK Ballistic Missile Test Signs

The Associated Press (Audrey McAvoy, "ENVOY: US HAS DETECTED SIGNS NORTH KOREA MAY BE PREPARING MISSILE TEST," Tokyo, 03/24/03) reported that the US has detected signs that the DPR may be preparing to test-fire a long-range missile, the top US envoy to Japan told senior ruling party lawmakers Monday, an aide to one of the lawmakers said. Although US officials say there is no indication of an imminent launch, the information comes amid concerns that the DPRK may test-fire one of its ballistic missiles to coincide with Japan's scheduled launch Friday of two spy satellites. The DPRK test-fired two short-range missiles in late February and early March amid tensions over its suspected nuclear weapons programs. The US and ROK called those tests attempts to force the US into direct talks. US Ambassador Howard Baker told Taku Yamasaki, the secretary-general of the Liberal Democratic Party, the US will notify Japan if there are clear signs that the DPRK is about to test a missile, a secretary from Yamasaki's office said on condition of anonymity. "There are some signs, but none that are certain. We will definitely inform Japan in advance if it becomes certain," the aide quoted Baker as saying. Baker met with Yamasaki and leaders from the LDP's two ruling coalition partners earlier Monday. The DPRK last tested a ballistic missile in 1998, when it launched a Taepodong over Japan and into the Pacific Ocean. The launch proved that virtually all of Japan is within range of the DPRK's missiles. The DPRK has had a moratorium on long-range missile tests since 1999 and last year promised Japan it would extend the ban beyond 2003. Last week, however, the DPRK said Japan's planned launching of spy satellites would violate the spirit of the Pyongyang Declaration last year in which it promised not to test ballistic missiles. It warned the launch of

Japan's first spy satellites might void the document.

6. Iraq Weapons of Mass Destruction

Agence France-Presse ("NO WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION FOUND IN IRAQ SO FAR: MYERS," 03/23/03) reported that US forces have not found banned chemical, biological or nuclear weapons so far during their incursion into Iraq, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Richard Myers said Sunday. "To my knowledge, we have not," the chairman of the joints chiefs of staff told ABC television. "I'm not sure you'd expect at this moment to find that either, because as you get closer to central Iraq, where we think most of the biological and chemical weapons have been stored and dispersed and hidden and we find people willing to come forward and point us toward those weapons and toward the documentation that we've been looking for, I think we would expect that to come later in this campaign." Myers said that some clues could be provided by material captured in western Iraq late Saturday by Special Forces. "They found a huge arms cache, millions of rounds of ammunition and some documentation that needs to be exploited.

7. International Non-Proliferation

Agence France-Presse ("WORLD MUST DO MORE TO PROMOTE WEAPONS NON-PROLIFERATION: EXPERTS," 03/25/03) reported that the international community must concentrate more efforts on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to reap long-term benefits, experts and scholars said at a symposium on non-proliferation in Tokyo. "Preserving and promoting non-proliferation is a challenge because it often involves paying short-term costs for anticipated but not ensured long-term gains," said Lawrence Scheinman, professor of the Center for Non-proliferation Studies at the Monterey Institute of International Studies in Washington DC. "A special responsibility falls to the permanent members of the UN Security Council as stewards of the only international institution entrusted by the international community with responsibility for maintaining peace and security," he said. About 50 people, many of them university academics, gathered for the one-day symposium hosted by the United Nations University and the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. "Japan, I believe, has contributed significant efforts in non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. But the recent tension involving North Korea and the situation in Iraq make it more important and urgent that we discuss this issue seriously and urgently," said Yoshitaka Shindo, parliamentary secretary for foreign affairs of Japan. Symposium participants also called on the PRC to open a dialogue over its weapons programmes, especially over arms exports. The PRC is yet to join international agreements on weapons exports and is involved in the spread of weapons and their technologies, said Takehiko Yamamoto, political science professor at Waseda University in Tokyo. "As a permanent member of the UN Security Council, China naturally is urged to actively take part in promoting non-proliferation," he said

8. US-Led War on Iraq Budget

The Washington File ("TRANSCRIPT: BUSH ASKS CONGRESS TO APPROVE $74.7 BILLION FOR IRAQ WAR," 03/25/03) reported that US President Bush, in remarks at the Pentagon March 25, announced that he was sending the US Congress a wartime supplemental appropriations request of $74.7 billion, "to fund needs directly arising from the Iraqi conflict and our global war against terror." The president said the funds would be used "to pay for the massive task of transporting a fully-equipped military force, both active duty and reserve, to a region halfway around the world," and also includes money for relief and reconstruction in a free Iraq. "This nation and our coalition partners are committed to making sure that the Iraqi citizens who have suffered under a brutal

tyrant have got the food and medicine needed as soon as possible," Bush said. The campaign in Iraq, he said, also "involves assistance of coalition partners and friends in the Middle East. The funding request to Congress will help reduce the economic burdens these countries have experienced in supporting our efforts. Also included are funds essential to waging, and helping our partners wage, the broader war on terror, which continues in Afghanistan, in the Philippines, and elsewhere."

For the full transcript:

http://usinfo.state.gov/cgi-bin/washfile/display.pl?p=/products/washfile/topic/intrel&f=03032503.tpo&t=/products/washfile/newsitem.shtml

II. Republic of Korea

1. Peaceful Resolution of DPRK Problem

Joongang Ilbo (Choi Hoon, "ROH REASSURING ON NORTH." Seoul, 03/25/03) reported that president Roh Moo-hyun Monday dismissed as "groundless and inaccurate" fears that DPRK would be the next target of US military campaign, an idea being widely discussed by the press and political commentators in ROK and abroad. "The U.S. officials in charge have repeatedly confirmed, to me, that North Korea is different from Iraq, and that the North Korean nuclear issue will be resolved peacefully." Roh said in a meeting with senior secretaries and aides. The president said that the idea that North Korea will be attacked scants the Seoul government's role in North Korean affairs. Roh's adviser for national security, Ra Jong-yil, also has stressed recently the difference between Iraq and the DPRK. "The recent discussion forums sponsored by Korean and foreign media holding that it is North Korea's turn next are merely speculation," said Song Kyoung-hee, the Blue House spokeswoman. "High-ranking U.S. officials have reiterated, over the phone and during their visits to Seoul, the principle of peaceful resolution," she said. "And as the two countries stand together on the principle of peaceful resolution, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade has requested to the US State Department that comments such as "We will leave if South Korea wants us to leave' not be made." Song said that the president remains opposed to the repositioning of the US forces stationed in the ROK.

2. Inter Korean Social, Cultural Relations

Jooogang Ilbo (Kim Young-sae, "SOCIAL, CULTURAL LINKS TO NORTH MULLED," Seoul, 03/25/03) reported that ROK Unification Ministry said Monday that it would propose to DPRK next month the formation of a new consultative body to promote social and cultural exchange between the Koreas. The proposal will be made at the ministerial conference scheduled for April 7 in Pyeongyang. If the body is established, the social and cultural cooperation committee could be operated in parallel to the economic cooperation committee that has become an important channel of exchange between the two Koreas, ministry officials said. The proposal announced Monday was part of the ministry's blueprint for the government's DPRK policy. Unification Minister Jeong Se-hyun led a team of officials in a discussion on DPRK with President Roh Moo-hyun and private-sector experts at the Blue House. The ministry listed a five-point agenda for better relations with DPRK, including a peaceful resolution of the nuclear issue and continuation of humanitarian assistance.

3. Anti-War Protest in ROK

Joongang Ilbo (Yoon Hyae-sin, Min Dong-ki, "ROH GROUP DEMANDS SEOUL END AID TO WAR,"

Seoul, 03/25/03) reported that anti-war protest has spread to include hard-core supporters who helped President Roh Moo-hyun win election last year. Nosamo, a Korean acronym for "People Who Love Roh" joined the growing number of groups protesting US and British war against Iraq. It is demanding the withdrawal of ROK's support for US and cancellation of the plan to send engineering and medical units. Nosamo supporters were prominent in organizing and funding Roh's campaign. An electronic poll of its members found more than 80 percent of the 2,588 participants in agreement with the statement that the US government's "invasion" of Iraq defies the international community's hope for world peace. The "participatory government," the Roh administration's slogan, should withdraw its support for the military campaign, Nosamo said, and the National Assembly should defeat the resolution to send the units. Major labor organizations are vowing to target lawmakers who vote for the dispatch of the Korean contingents and defeat them in the next general election. The Federation of Korean Trade Unions and the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions, the country's two leading umbrella union groups, said in a joint statement that lawmakers who voted for the resolution were "accomplices in a war crime."

4. ROK-US Alliance Dealing with DPRK

Chosun Ilbo (Kwon Kyung-bok, "HUBBARD UPBEAT ON SEOUL-WASHINGTON RELATIONS," Seoul, 03/25/03) reported that US Ambassador Thomas Hubbard affirmed Tuesday that US seeks a peaceful solution to the crisis on the peninsula, but said that returning to a previous agreement with DPRK was not an option. Hubbard, speaking at an event sponsored by the Military Academy's alumni association and held at the War Memorial museum in Yongsan, central Seoul, said that ROK-US alliance was a win-win situation. The ambassador praised the political and economic cooperation between US and ROK, and said the relationship would continue to develop and be mutually beneficial. Regarding DPRK's nuclear ambitions, Hubbard said that he met with National Security Adviser Ra Jong-yil and Foreign Minister Yoon Young-kwan on Monday, and that they agreed to seek a peaceful solution to the crisis. Hubbard said that US would not take any action without ROK's agreement.

III. Japan

1. Japan's Role in Iraq War

The Mainichi Shimbun ("IRAQ RECONSTRUCTION LEGISLATION TO COME AFTER MILITARY EMERGENCY BILL," 03/22/03) reported that the Japanese government was considering to begin deliberation of an Iraq reconstruction legislation after the Golden Week --consecutive holidays in Japan-- in May. The schedule is based on the prediction that the US-led war on Iraq will finish within a month. The ruling coalition is also seeking to consider the military emergency bill soon after the 2003 budget is approved in the end of March. But, an executive of the ruling coalition said, "We may give more priority to an Iraq reconstruction law than to the military contingency bill, if the Iraq war ends soon."

The Japan Times ("BUSINESS CHIEF ADVOCATES SPLITTING WAR COSTS," 03/25/03) reported that the chairman of the Japan Business Federation (Nippon Keidanren) said Monday that the private sector should cooperate with the government in the event that Japan shoulders part of the cost of the Iraq war and subsequent reconstruction efforts. "My personal opinion is that individual companies should bear a proper burden," said Hiroshi Okuda, who also serves as chairman of Toyota Motor Corp. Okuda said that, although Japan should shoulder part of the war costs, its contribution should not be big enough to trigger a further deterioration in the nation's already sluggish economy.

2. Iraq War's Effect on Japanese Economy

The Asahi Shimbun ("HITTING HOME: THE WAR WILL TAKE ITS TOLL ON THE ECONOMY, THINK TANKS SAY," 03/25/03) reported that the US-led war on Iraq will have negative repercussions on Japan's economy, regardless of the duration of the conflict, according to projections of Daiwa Institute of Research. A prolonged war would deal a serious blow to the already faltering Japanese economy. But a short war could still drag down the economy through such volatile factors as retaliatory acts of terrorism, they say. The scenario for a short-term war--about a month--sees an improvement for the US economy while painting a gloomy picture for Japan. Japanese exports will decline even after a short-term war, they said. Mired in bad-debt and uncertainty about the DPRK, Japanese consumer and business sentiment would not easily turn favorable. The Japanese think tanks predict that continuing negative sentiment would push real GDP down by 0.1-0.3 percentage point in 2003. The second scenario, for a middle-term war duration of two to three months, foresees oil prices rising and world economic growth sputtering. Under such conditions, Japan's economy could shrink. The third scenario, a prolonged war that drags on for more than three months, entails the threat of a worldwide recession. Serious damage to oil facilities in Iraq and neighboring countries would increase oil prices, possibly to $80 a barrel, according to CSIS. Increased war costs would expand US budget deficits, leading to higher long-term interest rates and a global downturn. Japan, which depends heavily on external demand, would not escape economic contraction, think tanks say. What's more, "if Japan is pressed for a large amount of contributions for Iraq's rehabilitation, the resulting increase in the public's burden would push down personal consumption," the Mitsubishi Research Institute said. Japanese think tanks predict a GDP contraction of 0.5 percent to more than 1 percent for fiscal 2003 in the event of a prolonged war.

3. Japanese Oscar Winner on Iraq War

The Japan Times ("MIYAZAKI MUM ON OSCAR, CITING WAR," 03/25/03) reported that Hayao Miyazaki, director of "Spirited Away," which won the Oscar for Best Animated Feature Film, indicated Monday that he finds it hard to celebrate the prize because of what is going on in the world, apparently referring to the war in Iraq. Miyazaki, who did not attend the 75th Annual Academy Awards ceremony held in Los Angeles on Sunday, said in a handwritten statement, "It is regrettable that I cannot rejoice from my heart over the prize because of the deeply sad events taking place in the world."

4. Tokyo Governor's Election

The Japan Times ("ISHIHARA'S TEAM FEARS WAR MAY AFFECT TOKYO ELECTION," 03/23/03) reported that aides and officials managing Tokyo Gov. Shintaro Ishihara's re-election campaign are concerned that the US-led war in Iraq may adversely affect the Tokyo gubernatorial election, while his rivals see it as a good chance to promote their peace policies. One of Ishihara's supporters expressed concern that public opinion may be turning in favor of one of Ishihara's rivals, Keiko Higuchi, who describes herself as a proponent of peace, amid worldwide antiwar sentiment. Higuchi, 70, a social affairs commentator and author, announced her candidacy at a news conference Wednesday. "The Tokyo gubernatorial race will be an opportunity for the people to show whether they are absolutely against a war or accept Japan's typical moves" in support of the US position on a war to disarm Iraq, she said. She described Ishihara as "militant," which she said the leader of Japan's capital should not be. Criticizing Ishihara for his hawkish and sexist comments, Higuchi described her entry in the race as a "contest between a militaristic uncle and a peace-addicted old biddy." Higuchi is running as an independent, but the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) and the Social Democratic Party (SDP) have expressed their support for her. Remarks by Ishihara, 70, have often

stirred controversy. Last year, for example, he told an US weekly that if he were prime minister he would start a war with the DPRK to bring Japanese abduction victims home.

5. Japan's Reaction to the DPRK Missile

The Mainichi Shimbun (Hirohumi Oniki, "A SIGN OF MISSILE LAUNCH TO AUTHORIZE DEFENSE OPERATION," 03/24/03) reported that the Japanese Defense Agency is planning to enable the prime minister to order defense operation if there is a "sign" of missile launch and it is apparent that the adversary tries to attack Japan, as a part of the government's reaction to the DPRK's ballistic missile program. The Self-Defense Forces (SDF) Law stipulates in Section 76 that the prime minister may order defense operation if there is a threat of military attack from the outside. The government is also considering revising the law to authorize the SDF to launch of an anti-ballistic missile before defense operation, i.e. before being ordered to do so by the prime minister. The Defense Agency also seeks to construct new missile defense system, because the PAC2 missile, now owned by the SDF, cannot shoot down the DPRK's Nodong missile, according to the high official of the agency.

6. Nobel Peace Prize Winners' Anti-nuclear Meeting

Kyodo ("NOBEL PEACE PRIZE LAUREATES TO MEET," Nagasaki, 03/23/03) reported that an group of scientists from around the world who are dedicated to eliminating nuclear weapons and war have announced plans to hold a meeting of Nobel Peace Prize winners in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 2005, Nagasaki city officials said Saturday. Monkombu Sambasivan Swaminathan, president of the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs, informed Nagasaki Mayor Itcho Ito of the plan when the two met at the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum on Saturday, the officials said. Ito was quoted by the officials as telling Swaminathan, "At a time when the (US) attack on Iraq has begun, this kind of move will send a message to the world. We want to cooperate fully." The meeting, to be held on the 60th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, will be jointly sponsored by the Pugwash group and the Gorbachev Foundation, headed by former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, the winner of the 1990 Nobel Peace Prize. Gorbachev and former US President Jimmy Carter, the winner of the 2002 Nobel Peace Prize, are scheduled to attend the meeting.

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.

Produced by the Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainable Development in partnership with:

Ilmin Internationl Relations Institute
BK21 The Education and Research Corps for East Asian Studies
Department of Political Science, Korea University, Seoul, Republic of Korea

Center for American Studies,
Fudan University, Shanghai, People's Republic of China

International Peace Research Institute (PRIME),
Meiji Gakuin University, Tokyo, Japan

Monash Asia Institute,
Monash University, Clayton, Australia

Brandon Yu: napsnet@nautilus.org
Berkeley, California, United States

Timothy L. Savage: napsnet@nautilus.org
Berkeley, California, United States

Kim Young-soo: yskim328@hotmail.com
Seoul, Republic of Korea

Hibiki Yamaguchi: hibikiy84@hotmail.com
Tokyo, Japan

Saiko Iwata: saiko@akira.ne.jp
Tokyo, Japan

Hiroya Takagi: hiroya_takagi@hotmail.com
Tokyo, Japan

Peter Razvin: icipu@online.ru
Moscow, Russian Federation

Wu Chunsi: cswu@fudan.ac.cn
Shanghai, People's Republic of China

Dingli Shen: dlshen@fudan.ac.cn
Shanghai, People's Republic of China

John McKay: John.McKay@adm.monash.edu.au
Clayton, Australia

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Nautilus Institute
608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email: nautilus@nautilus.org