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I. United States

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1. US MIAs from Korean War

The Associated Press ("N.KOREA RETURNS TWO SETS OF REMAINS," 05/25/98) and Reuters ("N.KOREA HANDS OVER REMAINS TO U.N. COMMAND," Seoul, 05/25/98) reported that the DPRK on Monday turned over two sets of remains believed to be those of US soldiers killed in the Korean War to the UN Command at Panmunjom. On Monday, the UN Command (UNC) requested a

meeting with DPRK officials, who agreed to return the remains after earlier refusing to surrender them to the UNC. UNC spokesman Jim Coles stated, "We do not know why North Korea changed its mind." Monday's repatriation brought to 218 the total sets of remains that have been returned, although less than a dozen have been positively identified.

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2. ROK Aid to DPRK

The Associated Press ("S. KOREA TO COMPLETE AID DELIVERY FOR N. KOREA THIS WEEK," Seoul, 05/26/98) reported that ROK officials said Tuesday that the government will send 3,000 tons of foodstuff and fertilizer to the DPRK this weekend, completing the delivery of aid that was promised during Red Cross talks in Beijing in March. Red Cross officials said that a ship carrying the sixth and last shipment will leave Saturday for the DPRK. The shipment includes 1,500 tons of wheat flour, 1,300 tons of fertilizer, 64 tons of powdered milk, and 109,000 liters of cooking oil. The ROK also was sending an ambulance car, chocolate, and medicine, although they were not promised in the Beijing talks.

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3. ROK Religious Group to Visit DPRK

United Press International ("S.KOREAN CHURCH OFFICIALS TO VISIT N.KOREA," Seoul, 05/25/98) reported that six officials from the ROK National Council of Churches (KNCC) were scheduled to enter the DPRK Tuesday for a seven-day visit to discuss inter- Korean exchange of religious leaders and construction of churches in the DPRK. KNCC spokesman Hwang Pil-kyu stated, "We received an invitation from our North Korean counterpart so there shouldn't be any trouble in flying to Pyongyang." He added, "KNCC officials met with Korea Christians Federation leaders four times since 1984. But because it is to become the first group meeting of the two sides, this trip bears great significance."

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4. DPRK Defectors

The Associated Press ("FIVE NORTH KOREANS DEFECT TO SOUTH KOREA," Seoul, 05/25/98) reported that the ROK Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade said that five DPRK refugees who fled the DPRK more than a year ago arrived in the ROK on Monday and were granted asylum. The five, including a married couple and a man and his two sons, fled separately in 1996 and 1997 across the DPRK border with the PRC and drifted across Southeast Asia before they were assisted by ROK officials. They brought to 31 the number of DPRK citizens who have defected to the ROK so far this year.

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5. Alleged DPRK Smuggling

The Associated Press (Grant Peck, "ORGANIZED CRIME PRESENT IN N. KOREA," Bangkok, 05/23/98) reported that many analysts believe that the DPRK is increasingly turning to smuggling and drugs to earn foreign currency. Frank J. Cilluffo of the Center for Strategic and International Studies stated, "Unlike Latin America or Europe, where organized crime attempts to penetrate the state ... North Korea ... is penetrating organized crime." An anonymous former law enforcement official said that the DPRK has forged partnerships with criminal gangs, including producing

counterfeit cigarettes and offering safe harbor for hijacked ships. He stated that a 1995 seizure by Taiwan police of 20 ship containers loaded with counterfeit cigarette packaging destined for the DPRK proved that country's involvement with a Southeast Asian crime syndicate. The UN International Narcotics Control Board said in its latest report that it "has received disquieting reports on the drug control situation" in the DPRK. Anecdotal evidence has been provided by defectors that the DPRK runs opium farms with the aim of exporting for hard currency, although one defector pointed out that the DPRK legitimately needs opium for medical uses because it cannot afford to import modern medicines. Arnaud de Borchgrave, director of the Global Organized Crime Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, said that Western intelligence agencies have confirmed that the DPRK has large-scale opium production for export. A private French organization, Geopolitical Drugs Watch, said that some of the DPRK's pharmaceutical production "seems to be diverted for sale to raise money for arms purchases." In late 1996, a senior Russian military intelligence official was quoted by the ITAR-Tass news agency as saying that DPRK timber workers in Russia's Far East are given drugs to smuggle for sale in Russia or transshipment to western Europe. Defectors have also said that counterfeit US currency is produced in the DPRK. Investigators say evidence exists backing the reports, including a purported videotape of the printing plant. In Romania, customs officials stopped two DPRK diplomats on March 27 carrying 12,000 pirated compact discs.

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6. ROK Student Movement

United Press International ("SEOUL TO ROUND UP 411 S.KOREA STUDENTS," Seoul, 05/23/98) reported that ROK prosecutors have announced plans to block a rally marking the sixth inauguration of the Federation of Korean University Student Councils. The government also warned that it is preparing a massive manhunt for 411 student activists from 50 universities slated to participate in the ceremony.

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7. Taiwan-PRC Relations

The Associated Press ("TAIWAN REDRAWS MAP OF CHINA," Taipei, 05/26/98) reported that the Taiwan Cabinet's Mainland Affairs Council announced Tuesday that maps of China printed in Taiwan will now be drawn according to the names and administrative zones used by the PRC government, instead of those used by the Nationalist government before it fled to Taiwan in 1949. The new maps will no longer refer to Beijing as "Peiping" and will organize the PRC into 23 provinces instead of 37.

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8. US Policy Toward Taiwan

The Washington Post carried an opinion article by Joseph A. Bosco, a senior fellow at the Atlantic Council of the US, ("TIME TO BE CLEAR ON TAIWAN," 05/26/98, A17) which said that the PRC wants the US to make concessions on US defense assistance to Taiwan when US President Bill Clinton visits the PRC next month. The author accused Clinton of yielding to PRC pressure by urging Taiwan to engage in negotiations with the PRC. He added, "While dialogue between potential adversaries is generally desirable, Beijing invariably casts it as Taiwanese acquiescence to its own 'one-China' formulation and demands that it lead to progress on 'reunification.'" He argued, "If President Clinton again acquiesces to Chinese pressures and again passes them on to Taiwan, the results could be equally counterproductive -- especially because legislative elections will be held in

the fall and relations with the mainland will be a major campaign issue in Taiwan." He called on Clinton to address Taiwan in two ways on his PRC trip. "First, he should refrain from making any further concessions to Beijing in the form of either reduced American defense support for Taiwan or increased diplomatic pressure on Taiwan to engage with China other than as an equal and uncoerced negotiating partner. Second, he must make clear to Beijing that Taiwan's status and its relationship with the mainland will be determined by the Taiwanese in accordance with the principles set forth in the Taiwan Relations Act and the United Nations Charter -- freely and peacefully."

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9. Clinton's Trip to PRC

Reuters ("CLINTON SAYS HE WILL NOT DELAY TRIP TO CHINA," Washington, 05/26/98) reported that US President Bill Clinton said on Tuesday that it would be a mistake for him to delay his visit to the PRC next month. Clinton argued that "our partnership with China has succeeded" in persuading the PRC to refrain from shipping missile technology to certain nations and in joining efforts to deter a nuclear arms race in South Asia. He stated, "I think we have a broad range of issues to deal with and I think we have enough evidence now to justify the partnership that we have, so I believe that we ought to go forward."

Dow Jones Newswires (I-Chun Chen, "CHINA APPEALS TO U.S. CONGRESS NOT TO HALT CLINTON TRIP," Beijing, 05/26/98) reported that PRC Foreign Ministry Spokesman Zhu Bangzhao appealed to US congressmen on Tuesday to stop their calls for US President Bill Clinton to postpone his trip to the PRC. Zhu stated, "Clinton's upcoming state visit to China is in the common interest of China and the United States and enjoys wide support by people in both countries."

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10. Alleged US Missile Technology Transfer to PRC

The Washington Post (Steven Mufson, "CHINESE FIRM DENIES IT GOT SENSITIVE TECHNOLOGY FROM U.S.," Beijing, 05/23/98, A16) reported that Liu Zhixiong, vice president of the China Great Wall Industry Corp., denied Saturday that his company had received any sensitive technology with military applications from the US firms Loral Space and Communications Ltd. or Hughes Electronics Corp. Liu stated, "Great Wall's business is launching commercial satellites. We don't do things with weapons." He said that, following the crash of one of China Great Wall's "Long March" launch rockets on February 15, 1996, the PRC aerospace industry formed its own investigative panel that ultimately "pinpointed" the cause of the launch failure without foreign help. He said that a separate group of foreign experts was formed to satisfy the concerns of the insurance companies, but that China Great Wall never saw their report because of objections by the US government.

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11. US-Japanese Missile Development Program

Dow Jones Newswires ("JAPAN, U.S. SIGN PACT ON MISSILE RESEARCH - KYODO," Tokyo, 05/26/98) reported that Japan's Kyodo News Agency said that, according to Japanese officials, Japan and the US on Tuesday concluded a memorandum of understanding to conduct joint research with the aim of developing technology to improve missile performance. The officials said that the two countries also exchanged official documents to promote plans for joint research.

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12. US Bases in Japan

The Associated Press (Kozo Mizoguchi, "OKINAWA COURT ORDERS COMPENSATION," Tokyo, 05/22/98) reported that the Fukuoka High Court in Naha, Okinawa, ordered the Japanese government on Friday to pay more than US$10 million in compensation for the noise from military jets to people living near the US Kadena Air Base. The ruling upheld a 1994 lower court decision ordering the Japanese government to pay nearly US$6 million to the plaintiffs, but increased the amount of compensation by lowering the noise threshold. However, the judge rejected a ban on flights between 7 p.m. and 7 a.m., saying that US military activity in Japan is allowed under the Japan-US defense arrangement and is outside the court's jurisdiction.

II. Republic of Korea

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1. US MIAs from Korean War

The DPRK on Monday repatriated two sets of remains, believed to be those of the US soldiers killed in the 1950-53 Korean War, through the truce village of Panmunjom. In a brief ceremony, the remains contained in caskets were delivered by DPRK soldiers to the UN Command (UNC) honor guard soldiers. The remains will be sent to the US Army Laboratory in Hawaii for identification, a UNC spokesman said. The remains, found in Gujang country by US forensic experts, are believed to be those of soldiers of the 2nd US Infantry Division killed in November 1950, the spokesman said. The return of the remains came after the US-led UNC denounced the DPRK for reneging on a promise to return the remains at Panmunjom on May 15. There has still been no explanation from the North about the incident. (Korea Herald, "NORTH KOREA RETURNS REMAINS OF US SOLDIERS," 05/26/98)

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2. DPRK-Taiwan Nuclear Waste Deal

Taiwan has virtually abandoned its plan to ship its nuclear waste to the DPRK, ROK officials said Monday. An official at the ROK Foreign Affairs and Trade Ministry said that the island country is instead seeking a nuclear waste disposal site in Russia or Mongolia. "Though it has not made it official, Taipei seems to have given up on the deal with the DPRK for its nuclear waste exports," he said. He said that the DPRK has recently refused to send additional records on storage facilities and freighters, which the Taiwanese government demanded for further nuclear safety inspections before it made a final decision on its shipment plan. "Taiwan has halted its review of safety concerning the shipment of nuclear waste to the DPRK," he said. Taiwan, which has yet to make a final decision, has issued no statement concerning its nuclear waste exports to the DPRK, which is threatening to file a suit for compensation if the contract is not honored. (Korea Herald, "TAIPEI, NORTH KOREA MAY SCRAP WASTE DEAL," 05/26/98)

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3. DPRK Environmental Degradation

Pictures released by Professor Kim Hwan-kee of Chunbook University clearly show the results of the closure of the Moosan Iron Mine in the DPRK. The pictures were taken by the LANDSAT satellite. An earlier photo taken on October 14, 1985 shows pollution as a gray shaded area clogging the river system and spilling out into the East Sea. The later photo, taken on September 9, 1996, shows that

most of this pollution has dispersed. Kim said that in 1985 the concentration of particles in the lower stream of Tumen River was 300mg/L, but that by 1996 it had fallen to 96mg/L. He said the this is apparently because the Moosan iron mine, which had dumped 10-15 million tons of powered waste into the river, suspended its operations in April 1996. He noted that the major difference in shading was due to seasonal differences between the photos. (Chosun Ilbo, "MINE CLOSURE CLEARS TUMEN RIVER IN NK," 05/25/98)

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4. ROK Financial Crisis

ROK Minister of State for Trade Han Duck-soo, vowing to push ahead with financial reforms and corporate restructuring, said Sunday that help from the US and the international community is vital if the ROK is to get its economy out of the current crisis and back on the right track. He made the remarks in a briefing on the ROK's policies on financial reform and corporate restructuring before visiting US Congressional staffers and businessmen, including those from General Motors. Han told them that if the ROK's economic reforms succeed, it is expected to regain economic vitality in the near future, with its gross domestic product growing by over 5 percent in the year 2000. The minister assured them that the government will strive to make the ROK a comfortable place for business by seriously pursuing market economy principles. (Korea Times, "HAN DUCK-SOO FOR US SUPPORT TO END CRISIS," 05/25/98)

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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The Center for International Studies,
Yonsei University, Seoul, Republic of Korea
The Center for Global Communications, Tokyo, Japan
Center for American Studies,
Fudan University, Shanghai, People's Republic of China

Wade L. Huntley: napsnet@nautilus.org
Berkeley, California, United States

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

Shin Dong-bom: dongbom_shin@wisenet.co.kr
Seoul, Republic of Korea

Choi Chung-moon: cily@star.elim.co.kr
Seoul, Republic of Korea

Hiroyasu Akutsu: akutsu@glocomnet.or.jp
Tokyo, Japan

Peter Razvin: icipu@glas.apc.org
Moscow, Russian Federation

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

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

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