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I. United States

1. ROK Red Cross Food Aid to DPRK

The Associated Press ("KOREAS AGREE ON FOOD SHIPMENT," Beijing, 5/27/97) and Reuters ("RIVAL KOREAS SIGN FOOD AID AGREEMENT," Beijing, 5/27/97) reported that ROK and DPRK Red Cross officials agreed Monday on terms for the shipment of 50,000 tons of food to the hunger-stricken DPRK by August. The food, mostly corn, amounts to a six-month supply for 600,000 people. Red Cross spokesman Johan Schaar said this is more than four times the number of North Koreans currently receiving Red Cross aid. He also said about one-third of the promised aid -- 15,000 tons -- already is being shipped by train from the PRC. The United Nations estimates that 4.7 million North Koreans -- a fifth of the population -- risk starvation this summer without massive food aid. The head of the DPRK delegation, Paek Yong-ho, said that the amount of promised aid was "quite small in comparison with the total effect of the disaster." "I cannot say it's enough, but anyhow it will help," he said. Paek asked for 100,000 tons of aid at one point during the talks. The ROK originally offered 40,000 tons. Both sides made other significant concessions to reach Monday's agreement, the first direct agreement between the Red Cross societies of the two countries in more than a decade. The DPRK Red Cross agreed to accept aid labeled as having come from ROK donors, to send food to areas or people designated by ROK donors, and to open more delivery

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I. United States

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I. United States

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2. EU Food Aid to DPRK

United Press International ("EUROPE TO SEND FOOD TO NORTH KOREA," Seoul, 5/24/97) reported that the European Commission announced it will donate 155,000 tons of food aid, worth more than US\$40 million, to help avert famine in the DPRK. The head of the European Union delegation in Seoul, Tue Rohrsted, said a two-man European delegation recently spent 20 days in the DPRK, where they found signs of malnutrition in kindergarten students and hospitals without sufficient medicine, food or staff. Rohrsted told reporters, "Whilst the Commission has prepared this operation on purely humanitarian grounds, it should also help to avert a possible deterioration in the

security situation on the Korean peninsula." Rohrsted said the European Union will donate 65,000 tons of corn and other aid toward the UN World Food Program appeal for 203,000 tons. The UN Food and Agricultural Organization says the European Union pledge will fulfill about 6 percent of the North's food import needs this year.

3. US View of New DPRK Food Aid

Acting US State Department Spokesman John Dinger ("STATE DEPT. NOON BRIEFING, MAY 27," USIA Transcript, 5/27/97) commented on Monday's ROK-DPRK Red Cross food aid agreement. "We welcome the agreement between the North and South Korean Red Crosses. We hope it will facilitate the delivery of food to those in need. I would remind you that the United States announced, on February 19th, a contribution of 27,000 metric tons of rice, corn and corn-soy blend. That was worth approximately \$10 million, and it was in response to the WFP appeal for North Korea. That contribution has already arrived on two ships -- one May 6th and one May 18th. On April 15th, the United States announced a second contribution to the DPRK in response to the WFP appeal. That response was for 50,000 metric tons of corn, valued at approximately \$15 million. That contribution is also being transported in two ships. The first is scheduled to arrive in North Korea on June 4th. The second ship carrying the remaining 25,000 metric tons of corn is still loading and will arrive in the DPRK, we believe, on approximately June 26th." Dinger also responded to a question regarding Friday's commitment by the European Union of 155,000 tons of food aid, about twice the size of the US contribution. "We absolutely welcome it. The WFP has made a sizable appeal. Even that, it has speculated, will not meet the needs of the people of North Korea. The United States has led by example, as I just recounted, some nearly 77,000 metric tons of food. We certainly welcome any other contribution from the international community, certainly including this one from the EU."

3. DPRK Famine Situation

The AP-Dow Jones News Service ("1997 N. KOREA FOOD STOCKS TO RUN OUT JUNE 20, U.N. OFFICIAL SAYS," Beijing, 5/27/97) reported that Rolf Huss, a UN World Food Program official, said Tuesday that the DPRK's public food stocks, already exhausted in some parts of the country, will have run out by June 20. Huss, who visited the DPRK from May 17-27 to assess the scale of the nation's food shortage, said that after stocks are exhausted, people will be dependent largely on foreign food aid, food imports, and whatever roots, weeds and other nourishment they can scavenge until harvests are gathered later this year. Huss said rations are now down to 100 to 200 grams a day, "which is definitely too little to sustain good health." Huss said DPRK officials told him that "coming into July, the food stocks in the central stores, the provincial stores, will be finished." Huss added that already, "you see people collecting weeds, roots that are edible. You see it everywhere, not only in the countryside, but also in the cities, in the parks."

4. IAEA Concerns about DPRK Nuclear Situation

Reuters ("N. KOREA IS HIDING NUCLEAR MATERIALS, INSPECTOR SAYS," Seoul, 5/27/97) reported that Hans Blix, the director general of the UN International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), said Tuesday that the DPRK is hiding a stash of plutonium, but evidence to prove it may be slipping away. Blix told a news conference that the DPRK had more plutonium than it admitted when it signed the agreement with the US in 1994 to freeze its nuclear program. "We have never said -- and we don't know -- how much more than a few hundred grams they have," Blix said, referring to the quantity that Pyongyang declared. Nevertheless, he said: "We have never contended that there is a nuclear device for explosive purposes."

United Press International ("IAEA WON'T MONITOR N.KOREA NUKE STORAGE," Seoul, 5/27/97) reported that Hans Blix, the director general of the UN International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA),

said Tuesday that the IAEA will not supervise Taiwan's planned exports of 60,000 barrels of radioactive waste to the DPRK. "No international organization has supervisory rights" over the planned shipment, he said. Blix also said state-run Taipower assured the IAEA that it will send only low-level nuclear waste to the DPRK, such as contaminated clothing and equipment from nuclear plants. Blix admitted the IAEA has little information on the DPRK's ability to store the waste, and that three IAEA officials now monitoring the DPRK's canning of spent nuclear rods have not seen the abandoned coal mine where Taiwan's waste is to be stored. He added that the IAEA has not asked Pyongyang for permission to inspect the site, hinting at the agency's limited rights in the DPRK.

5. US-DPRK Missile Talks

AP-Dow Jones News Service ("U.S., NORTH KOREA RESET IRAN, SYRIA MISSILE TALKS," Washington, 5/27/97) reported that the US State Department announced Tuesday that the US and the DPRK have rescheduled for June 11-13 talks on dealing with U.S. concerns over Pyongyang's transfer of missile technology to Iran and Syria. The talks were to have been held two weeks ago but the DPRK postponed them for technical reasons. The US side will be headed by Robert Einhorn, a deputy assistant secretary, while the DPRK side will be led by Li Hyon-chol, director of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The talks, to be held in New York, are a follow-up to an initial round held in Berlin in April 1996, at which the US sought a freeze on DPRK missile exports and production. According to US officials, the DPRK has sold long-range Scud missiles to Iran and Syria, and there also have been reports that the DPRK is preparing to deploy long-range Rodong I missiles that may be capable of hitting the ROK and much of Japan.

6. US Defense Secretary Comments on DPRK Threat

US Secretary of Defense William Cohen, in a televised interview ("COHEN ON MCLAUGHLIN PROGRAM MAY 24-25," USIA Transcript, 5/27/97), defended the findings of the US Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR). "What we found is that we have the right strategy. We have the strategy that involves shaping the environment; that means having forward-deployed forces in both the Asia Pacific Region and that of the European theater. It means being able to respond to the full panoply of crises that we might have to respond to, all the way from humanitarian operations to full-scale-type of conflicts." Cohen also defended the QDR's call for the US to continue to be able to fight two wars nearly simultaneously. "And I would point to, for example, the threat that currently exists on the Korean Peninsula and also Southwest Asia," Cohen added. Subsequently asked what he considered for the US in the world today to be "the hottest of the hot spots," Cohen replied, "I think, in the immediate future, we have to deal with the Korean situation, where they have a very formidable military, but a decaying, or at least a very threatened economic situation, which could pose a threat in terms of what they do. Do they implode, explode? Do they come to the table to try to work out differences with the South? I think that's a very dangerous situation."

7. Iran Denies PRC Chemical Weapons Aid

The Associated Press ("IRAN DENIES U.S. ARMS ALLEGATIONS," Tehran, 5/24/97) reported that the official Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) reported Saturday that Iran has rejected US charges that PRC firms provided Iran with chemical weapons technology. IRNA quoted Iran's ambassador to the United Nations, Kamal Kharazi, as saying the allegations are "thoroughly fabricated. Washington has once again resorted to baseless claims in an irresponsible manner in connection with the peaceful activities of the Iranian chemical industries." US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright told a Senate committee on Thursday that the US will cut trade with two PRC companies and a third in Hong Kong that are suspected of providing Iran with precursors for producing chemical weapons.

II. Republic of Korea

1. ROK Red Cross Food Aid to DPRK

Red Cross officials from the DPRK and the ROK signed an agreement Monday that will provide 50,000 tons of food aid for the hunger-stricken citizens of the DPRK. The food will be delivered by the end of July, said Johan Schaar, a spokesman for the International Federation of the Red Cross. After days of painstaking negotiations, both sides made concessions. DPRK representatives agreed to open up more delivery routes for the aid and that the food would be labeled as having come from ROK donors, while the ROK dropped its demand that food be delivered through the demilitarized zone. Allowing ROK trucks bearing marked boxes of aid to cross the demilitarized zone would have been a humiliation for the North, which bases its ideology on self-reliance, and difficult to conceal from its people. The DPRK dropped its surprise demand on Saturday that it receive 100,000 tons of aid delivered by the end of June. Schaar said this amount of aid was a "very substantial increase in what South Korea has supplied before in kind." (Korea Times, "SEOUL, P'YANG OFFICIALS SIGN ACCORD ON FOOD SHIPMENTS," 05/27/97)

With the inter-Korean Red Cross talks concluding successfully in Beijing, officials here hope that the Red Cross agreement will help promote dialogue between ROK and DPRK authorities. The agreement on the provision of 50,000 tons of corn is a major accomplishment in the history of inter-Korean dialogue. The last time Seoul and Pyongyang held any substantial talks was in 1995 when the South agreed to ship 150,000 tons of rice, worth US\$200 million, to the flood-stricken North. At that time Seoul hoped to open a standing channel of dialogue between authorities, but received instead a lukewarm response from Pyongyang. The inter-Korean Red Cross agreement will also affect efforts by Seoul and Washington to realize the four-party peace talks proposed to replace the current Korean Armistice Agreement with a peace regime. In preliminary contacts for the four-party talks, North Korea has called for an "advance" on grain aid to create an atmosphere conducive to the successful realization of the four-party talks. However, Seoul and Washington have maintained that it is impossible to offer the advance and instead called on the DPRK to join the talks first. Officials here view that if the DPRK feels no need for additional rice aid, it is unlikely to join the four-party talks because Pyongyang would feel burdened over the series of obligations it would have to shoulder in the process of the four-party talks. Officials said that the Beijing talks had hit a snag when the DPRK insisted on the provision of 100,000 tons of grain in advance, while the ROK firmly insisted on the provision of 40,000 tons of grain; the eleventh-hour agreement to an additional 10,000 tons helped the talks to conclude successfully. (Korea Times, "RED CROSS AGREEMENT HOPED TO PROMOTE DIALOGUE BETWEEN S-N AUTHORITIES," 05/27/97)

George Weber, secretary general of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, called on the ROK government to allow cash donations to the International Federation of Red Cross (IFRC) to pay for operational costs needed for aid transportation, distribution and monitoring in the DPRK. Weber made the remarks in a press conference after meeting Deputy Premier and National Unification Minister Kwon O-kie. So far, the Seoul government has stepped up efforts to offer food to the DPRK via the IFRC rather than making cash donations. The volume of aid given by the ROK Red Cross accounted for 7 percent in the first Red Cross appeal in September 1995, 22 percent in the second appeal in March 1996 and has so far met 30 percent in the third appeal made in November 1996. Although international donations met 85 percent and 77 percent of its first and second appeals, the federation has so far collected only 56 percent of its requirements for the third appeal. As far as the transparency of distribution is concerned, Weber said that the federation is satisfied with the outcome because the processes through which Red Cross beneficiaries have received food supplies on a monthly basis since September 1995 meet international standards. (Korea Times, "IFRC CALLS ON SEOUL TO ALLOW CASH DONATION TO

2. EU Food Aid to DPRK

The European Commission, responding to UN agencies' humanitarian appeal, will donate a huge aid package of US\$63 million to the DPRK, Ambassador Tue Rohrsted, head of the EC delegation, announced Saturday. The commission's aid package consists of 155,000 tons of grain and financial support for public health. The aid will be delivered through the World Food Program, other UN agencies, and non-government organizations, he added. The ambassador said that the European Union's donation was made on the basis of the EU's independent survey on the DPRK's food and nutritional situation. Since the UN launched its third appeal for aid to the DPRK, it faced difficulties in raising funds because of a stalemated effort to realize four-party talks designed to bring peace on the Korean peninsula and the North's refusal to allow international monitors to make random surveys on its food situation and the transparency of aid distribution. The ambassador said that the EU also initiated an accession agreement to the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO), the international consortium responsible for the construction of two light-water reactors in the DPRK. (Korea Times, "EU WILL GIVE \$63 MILLION IN AID TO NK," 05/26/97)

3. US Koreans Send Food Aid to DPRK

Korean expatriates in the US raised US\$100,000 in a campaign to help the famine-stricken DPRK, and have delivered food aid directly there, organization leaders said Thursday. The group, calling themselves "mutual help for compatriots," said its Washington-Baltimore regional headquarters bought 625 tons of corn with the money they raised and delivered it April 28 and May 2 without going through United Nations channels. The food was given to Christian, Catholic and Buddhist organizations in the DPRK. Group leaders said the aid will last about 10 days, if rationed, and will feed 139,000 North Koreans 250 grams of corn per day. The Korean word "hwahwe," meaning reconciliation, is written on every corn sack, the group said. The regional headquarters of the organization said it has already received US\$130,000 in a second donation drive, and plans to send another 1,000 tons of corn to the DPRK next month. (Korea Times, "KOREAN RESIDENTS IN US SEND CORN TO NORTH KOREA," 05/24/97)

4. DPRK Chemical Weapons Threat

Removing the threat of the DPRK's formidable chemical arsenal is becoming an increasingly urgent task for the ROK and the US. The dangers posed by the North's chemical weapons have been highlighted anew since the ROK last month joined the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), the international treaty banning the development, production, possession, transfer or use of chemical weapons. The DPRK, which has a large number of chemical weapons stored near the border with the South, has refused to sign the treaty. The CWC took effect April 29, and all signatory states are supposed to gradually destroy their entire stock of chemical weapons in the next ten years. With the ROK regulated by the CWC, the DPRK's continued refusal to join the convention has become a concern among ROK officials. ROK Foreign Minister Yoo Chong-ha told a National Assembly committee early this month that the DPRK is believed to have stockpiled up to 5,000 tons of chemical arms, the third largest chemical arsenal in the world after those of the US and Russia. Yoo said the North is also capable of producing 1,000 tons a year. Defense experts say chemical weapons are more effective when used in mountainous regions like the Korean Peninsula, and that the DPRK is developing medium- and long-range missiles that would make its chemical arms more threatening. In a recent meeting with reporters, Yoo described the DPRK's refusal to join the CWC as posing a serious threat to the security of the ROK. He said it will be one of Seoul's major diplomatic tasks to bring Pyongyang into the global regime which bans chemical arms. (Korea Herald, "NORTH KOREAN CHEMICAL WEAPONS POSE RENEWED THREAT TO SOUTH KOREA," Kim Kyung-ho,

5. Anti-DPRK Organization in PRC

Youths fleeing from the DPRK formed an underground anti-government organization in Beijing in February, declaring opposition to the Kim Jong-il regime, the Japanese daily Sankei Shimbun reported Friday. "The allied front of escapees aiding the survival of North Korean people and democracy" came into being through the merger of a few existing bodies like the "North Korean Escapees Association for Human Rights" and the "North Korean Escapees Fraternity Society," the daily said. The allied front issued a "North Korean human rights struggle declaration," demanding that the ROK and Japanese government put an end to their "irresponsible foreign policies" and undertake cooperation to restore human rights in the North. Attention is being drawn to the front's future activities, the daily said, in view of the fact that it was organized in Beijing where the DPRK has its embassy, and that a number of existing organizations have concerted their efforts to form it. An underground anti-Kim Jong-il body, called "Azalea Society," was inaugurated in Harbin in northern China in April last year. The society issued "an appeal addressed to 23 million North Korean brethren" in June. In the human rights struggle declaration, the allied front said it will mount a struggle against Kim Jong-il's ascension to power, and rewrite history to include the terrible experiences the escapees sustained from the state and the party in the north. (Korea Times, "YOUNG NORTH KOREAN ESCAPEES FORM ANTI-GOVERNMENT BODY IN BEIJING," 05/24/97)

6. New IAEA Director

A meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) recently failed to reach a consensus to elect Alexander Elbaradei of Egypt as the agency's next chief administrator. The meeting, held Friday at IAEA headquarters in Vienna, saw two of the 35 members of the IAEA board of governors fail to join the consensus for Elbaradei to replace the retiring Hans Blix. The IAEA will convene on June 4 for another round of meetings specifically to elect its new chief administrator. Seoul has failed to support or even recommend its former science and technology minister Chung Kun-mo as a candidate for the IAEA post, assuming that the Egyptian candidate would be elected. Chung has pursued a solo bid in the race for the IAEA position with the official recommendation of Cameroon and Mongolia. (Korea Times, "IAEA MEETING FAILS TO ELECT NEW DIRECTOR GENERAL," 05/27/97)

III. Russian Federation

1. Dismissals of Top RF Defense Officials

Segodnya's Pavel Felgengauer ("ADMINISTRATIVE SHOWDOWN INSTEAD OF MILITARY REFORM," Moscow, 1, 5/23/97) reported that RF President Boris Yeltsin at the RF Defense Council session May 22 fired RF Defense Minister Igor Rodionov, who just returned from his visits to the US and Japan, accusing him of having done "literally nothing" while just asking for more money. Yeltsin also dismissed RF Armed Forces General Staff Chief Gen. Viktor Samsonov. Yeltsin said: "I am not just dissatisfied, I am indignant with the way the army reform goes on and with the state of the Armed Forces in general The soldiers get thinner and the generals get fatter The generals today are the main brake on military reform." The Segodnya author criticized the action, arguing that Yeltsin's stated goals are virtually impossible to meet. Pointing out that Igor Rodionov "tried to save the army under monstrous shortage of funds," Segodnya's author speculated that Boris Yeltsin staged the "fireworks ... evidently to show that he cares about the army and the soldiers, that he doesn't like fat generals and will start to reform everything tomorrow." At the Defense Council session President appointed Strategic Missile Forces Commander Gen. Igor Sergeyev as acting Defense Minister and former Far Eastern Military District Commander Gen. Viktor Chechevatov as

General Staff Chief, although the latter appointment hasn't been confirmed so far.

Nezavisimaia Gazeta's Vadim Solovyov ("PRESIDENT MADE THE FINAL CHOICE OF MILITARY REFORM STRATEGY," Moscow, 1, 5/23/97) reported that a discussion on RF military reform at the RF Defense Council, with the main opponents being RF Defense Minister Igor Rodionov and RF Defense Council Secretary Yuriy Baturin, was pre-empted by RF President Boris Yeltsin's dismissal of Rodionov and RF Armed Forces General Staff Chief Viktor Samsonov at the opening of the session. Yeltsin described himself as "indignant" about the fact that "nothing has been done" to further reform, and that the defense budget, which is to go down to 3-3.5 percent of RF GNP by 2000, is still more than 5 percent. "Today you were to report what has been done to reorganize the army. But you have nothing to report, you've done nothing," he told the two dismissed officials. Commenting on the appointments of Strategic Missile Forces Commander Gen. Igor Sergeyev as acting Defense Minister and Far Eastern Military District Commander Viktor Chechevatov as GS Chief, Nezavisimaia Gazeta's author speculated that soon RF Defense Council Secretary Yuriy Baturin, the author of the concept of reform without extra funding that is favored by Boris Yeltsin, will become the Defense Minister.

Nezavisimaia Gazeta's Aleksandr Shvaryov ("LEBED ON RODIONOV'S RETIREMENT," Moscow, 2, 5/23/97) reported that former RF Security Council Secretary Aleksandr Lebed at a press conference in Moscow yesterday referred to RF Defense Minister Igor Rodionov's dismissal as "yet another example of excessive flexibility." He said: "The general served honestly for 42 years, but upon becoming the Defense Minister decided to bend whereto he was being bent. He let the Land Forces Commander-in-Chief be fired, changed his uniform for a civilian jacket, stood aside at the parade. As a result he has been thrown away." Aleksandr Lebed didn't rule out that the dismissal was connected with the RF-NATO act to be signed, because in his opinion Igor Rodionov was an anti-NATO "hawk." Also he considered the newly appointed acting Defense Minister Igor Sergeyev just a "padding" prior to the appointment of RF Defense Council Secretary Yuriy Baturin to that position.

Sovetskaya Rossia's Vasiliy Safronchuk ("ONE SHOULDN'T BLAME A MIRROR," Moscow, 3, 5/24/97) commented on RF President Boris Yeltsin's firing of RF Defense Minister Igor Rodionov and RF Armed Forces General Staff Chief Gen. Viktor Samsonov, finding some similarities between that "public flogging before TV cameras" and Nikita Krushchev's firing of USSR Defense Minister Georgiy Zhukov in 1957. The author described the latter as done in a less pride-hurting manner, behind closed doors and not on a leader's "whim" but, at least officially, by the USSR supreme collective authority of the time. Noting that Igor Rodionov had just returned from the US and Japan where he signed important bilateral documents, the author wondered "if those who negotiate and sign agreements with us can trust us after that." The author dismissed all RF President's accusations against the former Defense Minister and stressed that "Yeltsin has been tough with Rodionov and Samsonov because he is guilty himself!"

Segodnya's Yevgeniy Krutikov ("MAGINOT LINE' GOES THROUGH A GENERAL'S HEAD," Moscow, 1, 3, 5/24/97) commented on the recent dismissals of RF Defense Minister Igor Rodionov and general Staff Chief Viktor Samsonov, and the appointment Igor Sergeyev, Strategic Missile Forces Commander, and Anatoliy Kvashnin, North Caucasian District Commander, to the respective positions as defense Minister and acting GS Chief. Segodnya's author is highly critical of the dismissed persons, arguing that Igor Rodionov and other generals of his generation refused to take into account the new realities and were "just copying principles and methods of warfare" developed by Soviet generals during the Second World War correlated with the nuclear weapons factor. Although recognizing the new Minister Igor Sergeyev as "one of few army technocrats able to realistically assess Russia's prospective need for a modern army," Segodnya's author criticized the new GS Chief Anatoliy Kvashnin as one of those "elite generals" who are still "faithful to the Soviet

military doctrine" and are responsible for the failure in Chechnya. The personnel reshuffle in the GS is far from being over, Segodnya's author concluded.

Nezavisimaia Gazeta's Nikolai Vladimirov and Dmitriy Gornostayev ("A BUSY DAY OF THE HEAD OF RUSSIAN STATE," Moscow, 1, 5/24/97) reported in particular that RF President Boris Yeltsin Friday signed decrees appointing as Gen. Igor Sergeyev RF Defense Minister and Gen. Anatoliy Kvashnin as acting RF Armed Forces General Staff Chief. The author added that the dismissed Defense Minister Igor Rodionov, in contrast to his predecessor Pavel Grachev, has started openly speaking about the many weak points of the RF Armed Forces, including widespread corruption.

Kommersant-DAILY's Ilya Bulavinov ("HOW RODIONOV WAS DISMISSED," Moscow, 3, 5/24/97) published his half page interview with RF Defense Council Secretary Yuriy Baturin, who rendered in detail the actual "direct speech" process of RF Defense Minister Igor Rodionov's dismissal by RF President Boris Yeltsin at the last Council session.

Segodnya ("RUSSIAN OFFICERS ADVISED NOT TO BE IN LOW SPIRITS," Moscow, 1, 5/26/97) reported that former RF Defense Minister Igor Rodionov explained his and RF General Staff Chief's dismissals by saying that their ideas about the military reforms "evidently have been disagreeable" to RF President's "entourage." In his opinion, "for the military reform to be dynamic there should be no additional structure between the President and the Defense Ministry," a reference to the present RF Defense Council Secretariat. He said "they only hamper the President, the Defense Minister, the General Staff and the reform implementations in general." Addressing RF officer corps he said: "We will break the situation for the better, we will save both the army and the country's defense."

Nezavisimoye Voyennoye Obozreniye's Yevgeniy Moskvina ("PRESIDENT MADE HIS FINAL CHOICE OF MILITARY REFORM STRATEGY," Moscow, 1, 5/24-30/97, # 18 (45)) reported on the changes at the very top of the RF Armed Forces, adding at the end of the article that RF President Boris Yeltsin's determination manifested in the dismissal of Defense Minister and General staff Chief "will seemly be continued as regards the heads of other governmental bodies alien to the group of 'new' reformers. Rumors are becoming more and more pronounced about a soon dismissal of Internal Affairs Ministry head Anatoliy Kulikov, Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov, Attorney General Yuriy Skuratov and others."

2. RF State Duma Members Debate RF-DPRK Issues

Izvestia ("TIME TO GATHER THE ROCKS," Moscow, 4, 5/21/97) published an article described as a "press release," subtitled "On the issue of Russian-North Korean Relations" and signed by a "MAI Academician M. Monastyrskiy, Committee on Geopolitical Issues, RF State Duma." The author praises Kim Il-sung, the late leader of the DPRK, as "the most outstanding political person of the contemporary Korean history" and a man who cannot be seen on the same level as the leaders of the other former "socialist countries." The author argued that "nobody will ever" call him a puppet, while the economic and diplomatic successes of the ROK "do not compensate the irrevocable fact of South Korea's curtailed state independence." In the author's opinion, the collapse of the USSR and new RF policies created a geopolitical situation difficult for the DPRK and its leader, although with Yevgeniy Primakov becoming RF new Foreign Minister some hopes for the better emerged. The author praised Kim Jong-il's successes in consolidating the DPRK leadership, adding that "Hwang Jang-yop's defection is a case for psychiatrists," and urged the RF to get prepared for the ending of "the transition period" and DPRK entrance into "the era of a new generation of Korean leaders." Satisfied with the visits to the DPRK of RF Deputy Foreign Minister Grigoriy Karasin and RF State Duma Chairman Gennadiy Seleznyov, the author urged for a "maximum intensification of ... dialogue with Pyongyang" which is to be conducted "correctly, constructively and professionally." The author criticized the recent visit to Pyongyang by Vladimir Lukin of the RF State Duma Foreign Affairs

Committee, which "pursued the goals of probing the situation in the interests of those forces in Russia and abroad which put their stakes on the inevitability of a quick DPRK incorporation into South Korea," and could only serve to damage rather than help restore "a Russian-North Korean partnership." Dwelling on RF-DPRK agreements signed and to be signed, the author urged in particular for inclusion into the draft RF-DPRK Treaty a clause on "Russian guarantees of DPRK security which would prevent an unprovoked attack against it," which would be a "decisive contribution to peace on the Peninsula."

Izvestia ("IF EVERYTHING IS SO GOOD, WHY IS EVERYTHING SO BAD?," Moscow, 3, 5/24/97) published a reply to the article on RF-DPRK relations summarized above, authored by "RF State Duma Member, D. Sc. (History), Professor Vladimir Lukin." The author pointed out that the words "press release" mean that "the paper space has been bought" and wondered "by whom?" In his opinion, the praises therein to Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il are "hardly different from the official North Korean version." Concerning the DPRK-ROK comparisons, the author argued that "who is hungry and who assists whom" is not a matter for discussion because "everybody knows it." He criticized the "apologists" who favor the DPRK, and in particular the arguments that "our relations had been always cloudless prior to the damned democrats' advent to power," which he countered with the fact that in the DPRK he himself heard individuals "blaming Korea's split on Stalin" for allegedly agreeing with US and British leaders in Yalta and Potsdam "to divide Korea along the 38th parallel." The author argued against the proposal to include a "security guarantee" clause in the draft RF-DPRK treaty, because both parties have already agreed to omit it and because such a clause would mean a possible RF involvement in a "crisis in the Far East where we are especially weak." He pointed out that economic cooperation, beneficial as it might be, could only flourish if economic reforms in both countries were successful. Finally, rebuffing the personal criticism against him, the author stressed: "What I've said doesn't at all mean I'm against good relations. I'm against ideologized relations We should pursue a rational practical policy. North Korea is our neighbor. One should live with one's neighbor as a neighbor should. As a good neighbor, if that is even slightly possible."

3. RF Suggests "Cooperative Security" for Asia-Pacific

Segodnya ("RUSSIA SUGGESTS TO CREATE A NATO IN ASIA," Moscow, 4, 5/22/97) reported that RF Security Council Deputy Secretary Yuriy Deryabin addressed the participants of the 30th General Session of the Pacific Economic Council held in Manila. He noted that the military block aimed against the USSR during the Cold War still exists in the Asia-Pacific region. Now that the RF poses no threat to anybody there, he said, "we believe that those blocks should be transformed and adjusted to new realities." In his words, the RF stands for creation of a system of "cooperative security" in the region by means of a gradual progress towards a comprehensive regional model of military stability which could incorporate an RF-PRC-US agreement on regional nuclear arms race prevention, negotiations among regional powers of mutually acceptable levels of conventional forces and armaments, provisions for transparency of military doctrines and expenditure, and later in the future creation of "multilateral constant readiness forces" to be used upon the UN Security Council authorization for the purposes of peace-keeping and peace-making, conflict prevention, humanitarian and rescue operations, patrolling of disputed isles and fisheries.

4. RF-US Seminar on Plutonium Weapons Use

Nezavisimaia Gazeta ("PLUTONIUM PROBLEM," Moscow, 2, 5/24/97) reported that an RF-US seminar on "Utilization of Weapons Grade Plutonium in Russia and US" was held in Moscow Friday. Experts believe that by 2000 the total amount of plutonium generated in the world will reach some 1700 tons. The RF-US nuclear arms reduction process yields about 100 tons per each country, but no industrial technology exists as yet to utilize it. Being concerned with a possible nuclear weapons

proliferation risks, the US seems to prefer the idea of burying their plutonium underground in a "glassified" form. Contrary to that, RF experts see the plutonium as a "national treasure" and prefer to process it in nuclear reactors, because energy-wise 1 gram of plutonium equals 1 ton of oil. The seminar was an attempt to bring those different positions closer to each other.

5. Japanese Foreign Minister Welcomes RF to G7

Nezavisimaia Gazeta's Dmitriy Gornostayev ("TOKYO WELCOMES RUSSIA'S ACCESSION TO THE 'SEVEN'," Moscow, 2, 5/24/97) reported that Japan's Foreign Minister Yukihiko Ikeda, now on an official visit to Moscow, has had meetings first with RF Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov and then with RF President Boris Yeltsin and a First Deputy Premier Boris Nemtsov. During his meetings he officially notified his hosts for the first time that Japan now supports RF membership in the G7, and thus the visit is seen as a most important event in the history of RF-Japan relations since the RF-Japan Tokyo Summit Declaration of 1993. As a result, the G7 Summit in Denver in June is to be that of the "G8" rather than the "7+1" as has been the case before. Nezavisimaia Gazeta's author supposed that some US pressure also played its role, considering that in the past Japan opposed RF membership because of the territorial dispute over what the RF calls Southern Kuril Isles which are the Northern Territories to Japan. However, Japan's Foreign Minister told the newspaper that his country intends to continue insisting on the isles to be returned, interpreting the change of the position on RF membership in the G7 as a step forward that must be reciprocated by the RF on the territorial issue.

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

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