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I. United States

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1. Fuel Oil for DPRK

Dow Jones Newswires ("U.S. ASKS JAPAN TO HELP WITH FUEL OIL FOR N. KOREA - KYODO," Tokyo, 04/28/98) reported that Japan's Kyodo news agency on Wednesday quoted unnamed Japanese government sources as saying that US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright on Tuesday urged Japan to share the financial burden of supplying fuel oil to the DPRK. Albright reportedly made the request in talks with Foreign Minister Keizo Obuchi over bilateral cooperation in the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO). In a joint news conference with Obuchi afterwards, Albright stated, "We ... considered the serious situation in North Korea and the need to come to satisfactory resolution on funding of KEDO, which is vital for regional stability and peace." However, Japanese Foreign Ministry spokesman Sadaaki Numata said, "Japan, at this moment, wants to concentrate on efforts on light-water nuclear reactors." In a separate meeting Tuesday with

Koichi Kato, secretary general of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, Albright said that there will be moves in the DPRK to try to operate its existing nuclear facilities unless fuel oil is provided to the country. According to the Japanese Foreign Ministry, the US and the European Union have so far this year decided to provide only US\$47 million of the US\$60 million needed to pay for the 500,000 tons of fuel oil promised to the DPRK under the 1994 Geneva accord.

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2. DPRK Famine

The Associated Press (George Gedda, "U.N. PROMISED ACCESS IN NORTH KOREA," Washington, 04/27/98) reported that Catherine Bertini, head of the UN World Food Program (WFP), said Monday that the DPRK has assured UN relief officials that it will give agency monitors access to 49 counties that previously were off-limits for security reasons. He stated that if the DPRK keeps its promise, the program's monitors would be able to travel to all 210 counties in the nation, but if the DPRK reneges, the WFP will reduce the 658,000 tons of food designated for 1998 by an amount proportional to the population of the 49 counties. She added that the promise of nationwide access for the 46 WFP employees indicates great progress from a few years ago when the DPRK restricted monitors to the area around Pyongyang. Bertini said there has been a threefold attendance increase this year at monitored nurseries and kindergartens thanks to the greater availability of WFP-donated food at these institutions, but she emphasized that the DPRK food crisis remains "quite grave" in certain areas. She said that elderly persons are rarely seen on streets because they are too weak to leave their homes, and malnutrition has left some children "stunted for life, physically or mentally." At one hospital, she was told that for every 10 patients, six are severely undernourished and three do not survive.

The Wall Street Journal (Eduardo Lachica, "U.N. AGENCY SAYS NORTH KOREA COULD NEED YEARS OF FOOD AID," Washington, 04/28/98) reported that Catherine Bertini, executive director of the UN World Food Program, said that the DPRK will remain dependent on foreign food aid for many more years because of the effects of recent flood damage and a deteriorating economy. Basing her assessment on a four-day trip to the DPRK earlier this month, Bertini said that she found food shortages worsening in parts of the DPRK despite the buildup of international relief efforts since 1995. She added, "Without food, people don't just go hungry. People get weaker and weaker, and ultimately they are more susceptible to other diseases because they don't have enough nutritional support in their bodies." She said that during her trip she heard reports that in the countryside people are subsisting on "roots, leaves and even bark" to make up for dwindling food supplies. Meanwhile, two members of the US House of Representatives, Benjamin Gilman (R-NY) and Doug Bereuter (R-NE), recently demanded that US President Bill Clinton reduce this year's US aid contribution by 75,000 tons if the DPRK does not agree to allow at least 10 monitors, preferably Korean-speaking US citizens, from US nongovernment organizations to observe the delivery of the aid. However, the DPRK has so far been willing to admit no more than five US civilian monitors for visits of two weeks. At the request of the US, the WFP has agreed to place the delivery of a 75,000-ton portion of the US contribution in the care of a consortium of US private organizations. Bertini said that the European Union is prepared to contribute 100,000 tons of food to the DPRK this year, but is still undecided whether to send it through the WFP or its own distribution channels.

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3. ROK-Japan Fisheries Talks

The Associated Press ("S. KOREA TO OPEN TALKS WITH JAPAN ON NEW FISHERIES PACT," Seoul, 04/28/98) reported that a nine-member ROK delegation led by Yoon Byong-sae, a deputy

director general at the Foreign Ministry, left Tuesday for Tokyo to open working-level talks with Japan on concluding a new fisheries agreement. The two-day meeting Wednesday and Thursday is the first official discussion between the two countries since Japan unilaterally abrogated an old pact in January.

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4. ROK Financial Crisis

The Associated Press ("S. KOREAN PROSECUTORS SEND QUESTIONS TO FORMER PRES KIM," Seoul, 04/28/98) reported that ROK prosecution officials said Tuesday that they have sent written questions to former President Kim Young-sam on whether his economic advisers lied to him about the severity of the ROK financial crisis. They said that as soon as they receive Kim's answers, they will call in former Finance Minister Kang Kyong-shik and former chief presidential economic adviser Kim In-ho for possible criminal indictment.

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5. US Secretary of State Visits Asia

The Associated Press (Barry Schweid, "ALBRIGHT BEGINS ASIA TRIP," Tokyo, 04/28/98) reported that US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright paid a courtesy call Tuesday on the Japanese government at the start of her trip to Asia. Albright was scheduled to meet with Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto following earlier sessions with Foreign Minister Keizo Obuchi and Koichi Kato, a leader of the ruling Liberal Democrats. Hashimoto and Obuchi are expected to provide her with a report on meetings Hashimoto held last week with Russian President Boris Yeltsin.

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6. Japanese Reaction to Clinton's PRC Trip

The Los Angeles Times carried an analytical article (Tom Plate, "IN A TENSE RELATIONSHIP, SMALL SLIGHTS HURT," Tokyo, 04/28/98) which said that many Japanese worry that US President Bill Clinton's decision to exclude a stopover in Japan after his trip to the PRC might indicate that improvements in US-PRC relations could come at the expense of good Japan-US relations. The article said that officials are concerned that growing tensions in the Japanese-US relationship will prompt the Japanese public to interpret the President's decision as a snub of Japan. Former Japanese diplomat Yoshio Hatano was quoted as saying, "On balance, Clinton would do himself a lot of good if he dropped by, even for one afternoon." Takeshi Kondo, a top executive of the Japanese trading firm Itochu Corp., argued, "The omission will give America's enemies in Japan a golden opportunity to criticize; it will send the wrong message to the Japanese public, and it will lead the Chinese to misunderstand the nature of the Japan-U.S. relationship. It is a fundamental strategic mistake."

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7. Japanese Finance Ministry Scandal

The Washington Post (Sandra Sugawara, "JAPANESE PUNISH FINANCE OFFICIALS," Tokyo 04/28/98, A11) reported that the Japanese Ministry of Finance announced Tuesday that it had disciplined 112 of its officials for improperly accepting meals and entertainment from financial institutions that they supervise. Two senior officials, including the head of the securities bureau, resigned, while others received official reprimands.

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8. Alleged Russian Aid to Indian Missile Development

United Press International ("RUSSIA AIDS INDIA ON MISSILE," New York, 04/27/98) reported that US administration officials said that Russia may be helping India develop a submarine-borne missile, the Sagarika. The New York Times reported that Russia maintained that it has given limited help and was not violating a 1993 agreement between the US and Russia not to aid in the spread of ballistic-missile technology. Unnamed administration officials said that Russian assistance has been going on for three years, despite appeals from Vice President Al Gore and others.

United Press International ("INDIA DENIES NEW YORK TIMES REPORT," New Delhi, 04/27/98) reported that Indian Foreign Ministry officials said that there is no truth to a New York Times report that Russia is helping India build a sea-launched ballistic missile that could carry a nuclear warhead deep into Pakistan.

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9. US Nuclear Weapons Maintenance

The Washington Post (Walter Pincus, "NEW METHODS HELP MAINTAIN NUCLEAR ARMS," 04/28/98, A06) reported that the US Department of Energy (DOE) is overseeing a US\$4.1 billion--year stockpile stewardship and management program to rebuild some of the approximately 9,000 nuclear warheads that remain in the US arsenal to extend the life of some weapons for at least 25 more years. According to Gene Ives, deputy assistant secretary of energy for military applications and stockpile management, the Mark 21 reentry vehicles that contain the W87 nuclear warheads on MX intercontinental ballistic missiles are scheduled to be taken off those ICBMs and refurbished. The Mark 21/W87 combination was chosen as the first nuclear weapon to be refurbished under the program because of its potential role after the ratification of START II. Greg Mello, director of the Los Alamos Study Group, a collection of 39 disarmament and environmental groups, said that the DOE program reveals "a shocking disregard for U.S. commitments, especially those enshrined in the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty to end the nuclear arms race." However, [Thomas Graham](#), a former senior official with the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, said that without the DOE program, the 1996 Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty would have almost no chance for approval by the US Senate. C. Bruce Tarter, director of the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, told Congress recently, "Material breakdown occurs from exposure to radiation, higher than normal temperatures and gases that accumulate over time in a hermetically sealed weapon environment." However, Tarter added that "no signs of catastrophic aging" have been found in the DOE's stockpile stewardship program. According to a DOE publication, with seven nuclear missile and bomb systems now operational and the average age of each at 15 years, the US stockpile "is older than ever before." [Ed. note: Stephen Schwartz of the Brookings Institution claimed that the Washington Post article contains several factual errors. See Section 2, below.]

II. Analysis

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1. US Nuclear Weapons Maintenance

[Ed. note: Stephen I. Schwartz, Director of the US Nuclear Weapons Cost Study Project at the Brookings Institution, claims to have found the following eight factual errors in Walter Pincus'

article in the Washington Post on April 28, which was summarized in item 9 in the US Section, above. The complete text of the [Washington Post](#) article can be obtained online or by sending a request to the [NAPSNet coordinator](#).]

1. The exact yield of the W87 warhead for the MX missile is classified (as are the yields of nearly all other warheads, past and present). But the best and most accurate publicly available data come from the Nuclear Weapons Databook Project at the Natural Resources Defense Council, which has for years placed the yield at 300 kilotons.
2. Therefore, each W87 has a yield 20 times greater than the 15 kiloton bomb dropped on Hiroshima.
3. The DOE has stated that its stockpile stewardship and management program is expected to cost US\$45 billion over ten years, for an average annual cost of US\$4.5 billion a year (this year the DOE anticipates it will spend US\$4.3 billion). In fact, this average annual cost is US\$800-900 million more per year (in constant 1996 dollars) than what the Atomic Energy Commission and the DOE spent on average during the Cold War (1948-1991), when nuclear testing and nuclear weapons production were in full operation.
4. There are only (and have never been more than) 50 MX missiles deployed at F.E. Warren Air Force Base in Wyoming and each carries 10 W87s (according to the NRDC).
5. While there has never been a full-scale test of an actual ICBM launch over the North Pole to targets inside Russia (or vice-versa), it is wrong to infer that no launch-to-target testing has occurred or that nuclear warheads have never been carried into space and successfully detonated.

Between August 27 and September 6, 1958, the Department of Defense conducted OPERATION ARGUS, a series of three clandestine tests in the South Atlantic about 1,100 miles southwest of Capetown, South Africa. In each test, specially modified Lockheed X-17a three-stage ballistic missiles were launched from the USS Norton Sound carrying low-yield (1.7 kiloton) W25 warheads. Each warhead detonated at a height of about 300 miles. The purpose of the tests was the study how very high-altitude detonations might interfere with communications equipment and ballistic missile performance. On May 6, 1962, the submarine USS Ethan Allen (SSBN 608) launched a Polaris A2 missile while submerged about 1,500 nautical miles east-northeast of Christmas Island in the Pacific Ocean in a test code-named "Frigate Bird." The missile's re-entry vehicle traveled about 1,020 nautical miles toward the island, detonating at an altitude of 8,300 feet. The yield of the W47Y1 warhead has been estimated at 600 kilotons. "Frigate Bird" was the first and only operational test of a U.S. SSBN/SLBM weapon system.

Finally, between July 9 and November 1, 1962, the United States successfully launched three Thor intermediate-range ballistic missiles and one STRYPI rocket from (or in the vicinity of) Johnston Island, 780 miles west-southwest of Hawaii. The "Starfish Prime" test detonated a 1.45 megaton W45 warhead at a height of 248 miles; the "Checkmate" test detonated a low-yield XW-50X1 at a height of 91.5 miles; the "Bluegill Triple Prime" test detonated a W50 warhead with a submegaton yield at a height of 30 miles; and the "Kingfish" test detonated a W50 warhead with a submegaton yield at a height of 60 miles.

6. The Partial Test Ban Treaty was ratified and entered into force on October 10, 1963. However, the last U.S. atmospheric nuclear test ("Tightrope") took place on November 4, 1962, 13 miles above Johnston Island, using a low-yield W31 warhead carried aboard a Nike Hercules missile. The last nuclear weapon dropped from a plane ("Housatonic") was a megaton range device dropped from a B-52 bomber on October 30, 1962 and detonated 12,130 feet above Johnston Island.

7. All nuclear test sites used by the United States in the Pacific between 1946-1962 (Eniwetok and Bikini Atolls, which together comprised the Pacific Proving Ground, Christmas Island, and Johnston Island) are above the equator and therefore in the North Pacific.

8. There are currently nine types of operational nuclear warheads and gravity bombs in the U.S. stockpile. These weapons are carried aboard two types of ICBMs, two types of SLBMs, three types of cruise missiles, two types of strategic bombers, and several types of tactical aircraft:

--B61 Mods 3, 4, 10 (Air Force and NATO tactical aircraft) --B61 Mod 7 (B-2A; B-52H) --B61 Mod 11 (B-2A; F-16) --W62 (Minuteman III) --W76 (Trident I/C4) --W78 (Minuteman III) --W80-0 (Sea-Launched Cruise Missile) --W80-1 (Air-Launched Cruise Missile; B-52H) --W80-1 (Advanced Cruise Missile; B-52H) --B83 (B-2A; B-52H) --W87 (MX) --W88 (Trident II/D5)

In addition, an estimated 400 W84 warheads from the Ground-Launched Cruise Missiles removed under the INF Treaty are being held in reserve status by the DOD at Kirtland Air Force Base in New Mexico.

Finally, the Los Alamos Study Group is not "a collection of 39 disarmament and environmental groups." Pincus has confused LASG with the coalition of organizations (led by NRDC) which is suing DOE over the stockpile stewardship program.

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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