NAPSNet Daily Report 29 September, 1998

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 29 September, 1998", NAPSNet Daily Report, September 29, 1998, https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-29-september-1998/

IN TODAY'S REPORT:

I. United States

- 1. DPRK UN Speech
- 2. Implementation of Agreed Framework
- 3. DPRK Seizure of Korean-American
- 4. ROK Labor Unrest
- 5. ROK Economic Crisis
- 6. Asian Economic Crisis
- 7. Declassified US Documents
- 8. PRC-Taiwan Economic Relations
- 9. US South Asian Sanctions

II. Republic of Korea

- 1. DPRK Military
- 2. ROK Food Aid for DPRK

III. Press Release

- 1. US Aid to DPRK

I. United States

[][]

1. DPRK UN Speech

The Associated Press (Edith M. Lederer, "NORTH KOREAN MINISTER WARNS OF WAR," United Nations, 09/28/98) reported that DPRK Vice Foreign Minister Choe Su-hon official told the UN General Assembly Monday that the continued division of the Korean peninsula is increasing the danger of another Korean War. Choe stated, "As a result of the present military maneuvers against North Korea on and around the Korean peninsula, a danger that either the 20th century may close or

the 21st century may open with another Korean war is getting ever more imminent." Choe said that reunification would remove the danger of war, adding, "It is our consistent stand to hold dialogue for reunification and to improve relations between the north and south of Korea." Choe reiterated the DPRK's demand that the US withdraw its forces from the ROK. He also said that Japan should not hinder reunification "by aggravating the tense situation on the Korean peninsula." He added, "In order for the Korean people to solve questions on national unity and reunification by themselves, countries concerned including the United States and Japan should refrain from acts of hindering the efforts of the Korean people." Choe pointed to the DPRK's satellite launch on August 31 as a demonstration of "the might of our scientific and technical development." He called for nuclear disarmament to remain a priority on the UN agenda.

[][][]

2. Implementation of Agreed Framework

The Los Angeles Times carried an analytical article (Tom Plate, "IS CRAZY THE ONLY ANSWER TO CRAZY?" 09/29/98) which warned that the failure of the US to implement the 1994 Agreed Framework with the DPRK could lead to a war with devastating consequences. The article quoted an unnamed US military source in the ROK as saying that, in case of a war, the DPRK "wouldn't just pour over the border as foot soldiers. The North's artillery would rain down on Seoul. Their Rodong missiles would slime the southern cities with chemical agents. North Korean special forces are already in South Korea, and they would do everything from blowing up TV stations to killing South Korean leaders. The North has the ability to threaten South Korea in depth, not just along the DMZ. We'd stop the ground assault--it's the other stuff that would do the real damage." The article also quoted Peter Hayes, co-executive director of the Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainable Development, as saying, "The political posturing to wreck the Agreed Framework is irresponsible in the extreme. It makes it much harder to engage them cooperatively--to test their will to work cooperatively with the United States, instead of having to rely solely on conventional military threats and nuclear extortion as its means of communicating with the United States. Dumping KEDO sounds smart until you examine the alternatives. When the Republicans look over the precipice, they will conclude that jumping over cliffs is bad for your health." The author warned that, if the Republican-led Congress dismantles the Agreed Framework, "In its place, they have nothing to propose more substantive than a commission to study the issue."

[][][]

3. DPRK Seizure of Korean-American

The Associated Press ("COLLEGE PRESIDENT HELD IN N. KOREA," Seoul, 09/29/98) reported that the ROK's Agency for National Security Planning said Tuesday that Kim Jin-kyong, president of Yanbian Engineering College in the PRC's Yanbian province, has been held in the DPRK for two weeks. Kim, an ROK-born U.S. citizen, entered the DPRK in early September, along with a Christian pastor from Seoul, for a 10-day stay. The pastor was allowed to leave at the end of the trip but Kim was not. ROK media said that the two planned to discuss building a dental hospital in Pyongyang and an engineering college in the DPRK's Rajin-Sonbong free trade zone. The ROK newspaper JoongAng Ilbo reported that Kim was questioned about whether he had given bribes to DPRK officials.

[][][]

4. ROK Labor Unrest

Reuters (Yeom Yoon-jeong, "SOUTH KOREA BANK UNION SAYS STAGE HUGE STRIKE," Seoul,

09/28/98) reported that Choo Won-suh, president of the Korean Federation of Bank and Financial Labor Unions, on Tuesday declared a general strike of 36,000 bank workers. Kim Young-joo, vice president of the federation, stated, "We cannot accept their (presidents of nine commercial banks) offer to curtail the number of bank employees by 33 percent." The ROK government has declared the strike illegal and said it would sternly deal with it.

[][][]

5. ROK Economic Crisis

The Wall Street Journal ("KOREA'S PRESIDENT PREDICTS GROWTH BY MID-1999 AMID REFORM EFFORTS," Seoul, 09/29/98) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-jung said Tuesday that the economy will be able to resume growth around the middle of next year. Kim said that business restructuring among the nation's five largest conglomerates is expected to be completed by the end of this year and the economy will begin to pick up next year as the effects from structural reforms begin to show. Kim also said that the government will again allow next year's fiscal deficit to stand at 5 percent of gross domestic product to support the social safety net, improve infrastructure, and boost the information industry. He added that the government will also continue to adopt a flexible monetary policy to support the domestic economy.

[][][]

6. Asian Economic Crisis

The Wall Street Journal (Henny Sender, "JAPAN IS EXPECTED TO PLEDGE AID TO FOUR ASIAN NATIONS NEXT WEEK," Tokyo, 09/29/98) reported that an unnamed senior Japanese government official said Tuesday that Minister of Finance Kiichi Miyazawa is expected to announce an initiative to support economically troubled Asian countries at the annual meetings of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund next week in Washington. Under the proposal, Japan will offer aid to Indonesia, Thailand, the ROK, and Malaysia, including loan guarantees and interest-rate subsidies.

[][][]

7. Declassified US Documents

The Los Angeles Times (Jim Mann, "U.S. CONSIDERED '64 BOMBING TO KEEP CHINA NUCLEAR-FREE," Washington, 09/27/98) reported that a recently released collection of US government documents about US policy toward the PRC during the Lyndon Johnson presidency show that US policymakers considered bombing the PRC's nuclear test facilities in 1964 to prevent the PRC from becoming a nuclear power. The documents show that the US State Department asked the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in mid- 1963 to draw up a contingency plan for an attack, with conventional weapons, on the PRC's nuclear facilities. The Joint Chiefs said that a bombing operation would be feasible, but recommended consideration of the use of nuclear weapons. However, a policy memo pointed out, "Direct action against the Chinese Communist nuclear facilities would, at best, put them out of operation for a few years (perhaps four or five)." The Central Intelligence Agency also considered a clandestine operation against the PRC's nuclear facilities. US policymakers also explored the possibility of "joint action" with the Soviet Union against the PRC's nuclear program, but Soviet Ambassador Anatoly F. Dobrynin showed no interest in the proposals.

[][][]

8. PRC-Taiwan Economic Relations

Reuters ("CHINESE NET FIRM IN PACT WITH TAIWAN NEWS AGENCY," Hong Kong, 09/29/98) reported that China Internet Corp (CIC), a Hong Kong-based Internet firm about 60 percent owned by the PRC's official Xinhua news agency, said on Tuesday that it had completed its first commercial deal with Taiwan's official Central News Agency (CNA). CIC said that the deal calls for it to repackage, promote, and sell real-time business news from CNA, via the Internet, to subscribers in the PRC and Hong Kong. CIC said in a statement, "The historic decision by the two parties to market the real-time business news service, under the brand china.com, marks the first step in a unique collaboration between the two prominent media groups in the development and delivery of on-line information services to Greater China. Through this unique co-operation with CNA, CIC looks forward to opening a new page in delivering online information services to Greater China." Tiao Hung-chih, director of the CNA's business information department, said that the deal is strictly apolitical, adding, "China Internet will not carry our political or general news services."

[][][]

9. US South Asian Sanctions

Reuters ("U.S. PANEL REVISES INDIA, PAKISTAN SANCTIONS," Washington, 09/29/98) reported that negotiators from the US House of Representatives and Senate voted on Monday to give US President Bill Clinton flexibility to lift sanctions against India and Pakistan. Negotiators rejected a proposal to exempt food and medicine from all unilateral US embargoes.

II. Republic of Korea

[][][]

1. DPRK Military

According to the ROK's "White Paper on Defense 1998," the DPRK has increased its paramilitary forces by 900,000 to 7,450,000 personnel in the year to date. The ROK and the US are developing a contingency strategy to destroy chemical and biological weapons before the DPRK has an opportunity to deploy them. Both countries have agreed on counter- measures for any sudden change in the DPRK's political situation, including the collapse of the DPRK government. According to the paper, the DPRK has 1,160,000 personnel in its regular army, an increase of 13,000 over the previous year. The increase included 8 new army divisions, 800 artillery pieces, 170 naval vessels, and 30 tanks. The white paper also said that the DPRK succeeded in its project to cultivate viruses for biological warfare in 1980 and tested the virus on live subjects at the end of the 1980's. (Chosun Ilbo, "NK BOASTS 7.45 MILLION PARAMILITARY FORCE," 09/29/98)

[][][]

2. ROK Food Aid for DPRK

The ROK "Love Your Neighbor" Association has sent 104 of the 200 cows it has bought to the DPRK Sunday via Inchon port. The animals are being ferried to Nampo on the container ship Sona, which regularly plies between the two ports. The cows are housed in special containers along with fodder and are scheduled to arrive at Nampo on Monday. The remaining 96 will be sent on October 22 with 23 tons of fodder. The association said that all the cows are pregnant, so that the eventual number of cows will be 400, with 300 at least by the end of the year. (Chosun Ilbo, "LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR ASSOCIATION SENT 104 DAIRY COWS," 09/29/98)

III. Press Release

[][][]

1. US Aid to DPRK

US Representative Tony Hall, D-Ohio, issued a press release (DON'T CUT OFF HUMANITARIAN AID TO NORTH KOREA, HALL URGES CONGRESS," Washington, 09/29/98) which said that provisions proposed in closed-door sessions of a House-Senate conference committee would effectively cut off humanitarian aid to the DPRK. Hall, in a letter to leaders of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees, noted that the ROK opposes ending such aid. He added that a US pull-out from the international humanitarian effort would cripple the UN's efforts to feed the young children who are the primary target of World Food Program appeals for aid. Hall stated, "Our quarrel with Pyongyang is over KEDO, and over its missile development and exports. It is not with the North Korean children whose lives are being saved by U.S. humanitarian aid, and who are our best hope for peace on the Korean Peninsula." He added, "Proponents of adding these extreme provisions don't suggest that American food is being diverted, or that it is not saving lives. Instead, they complain that corn and wheat have not achieved, in three years, fundamental reform of North Korea's regime. Neither has our half-century-long commitment of troops to the region -- an investment that costs $10 billion each year." Hall stated, "Our food aid is doing its job: feeding starving people. And it is building goodwill necessary to accomplishing our other goals. I have seen that firsthand, as have dozens of aid workers and American diplomats." He concluded, "Ending our efforts with this arbitrary intervention in the Administration's authority to conduct our country's foreign policy will not further American interests. It will result in the loss of many lives, and it will hinder diplomatic efforts to improve security in the region -- a goal we all share." For more information, contact Deborah DeYoung, 202-225-1217.

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:
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

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

View this online at: https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-29-september-1998/

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