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United States Department of State  
Bureau of Intelligence and Research

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# The Secretary's Morning Intelligence Summary

January 29, 1994

Dept. of State, RPS/IPS, Margaret P. Griefeld, Dir.  
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**DPRK: Reaction to Patriots**

*Precisely how Pyongyang reacts to reports of US plans to deploy Patriots in South Korea will be determined, in part, by what else happens in the days and weeks ahead. For now, the North is holding its options open.*

**First reaction**

The North's initial response to the news of Patriot deployments, an unattributed commentary issued yesterday, is typical of what Pyongyang does in the initial stages of a new situation: the North wants to record its strong opposition without committing itself to any particular line of action while it sorts out its options. A higher-level, more definitive response — a *Nodong Sinmun* editorial or a foreign ministry statement, for example — awaits leadership decisions that usually take several days.

Though mostly a pastiche of themes that have appeared in other commentaries over the past month, this first response to the Patriots is clearly intended to signal that, at least for now, there has been no decision to back away from diplomatic engagement with the United States on the nuclear issue.

The commentary portrays the US-DPRK talks in a positive light, tempers criticism of the United States (i.e., there are no references to US "imperialism"), and lashes out at "some conservative forces and bellicose elements in the US military," consistent with the North's practice since late December not to criticize the US government directly; the version of the commentary for overseas consumers drops this passage.

**Breathing space**

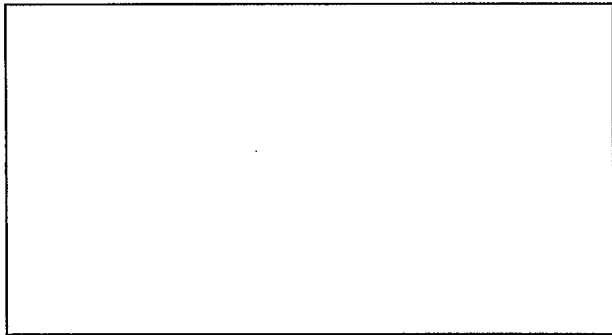
The commentary notes that the Patriots have not yet arrived and that the deployment is still only a "plan." By portraying the process as in an early phase, the North has given itself room to maneuver. Probably reflecting the fact that the leadership is still mulling the issue, the commentary contains no direct threats of countermeasures. The characterization of the plan to introduce Patriots as an "unpardonable grave military challenge," and the

warning that pressure on the North may lead to a "catastrophe," are not unusual, especially in this sort of low-level, unattributed piece.

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weeks ahead – especially if actual deployment, an announcement on the start of Team Spirit, or a move to UN sanctions follows soon. The North must interpret the Patriot announcement in the context of recent positive signals, such as the President's non-threatening reference to Korea in his State of the Union address and Billy Graham's delivery of a message from the President to Kim Il Sung. Until the North has decided how to respond, resort to familiar rhetoric critical of the United States (and the ROK) will dominate low-level commentary.

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**Mixed signals**

Precisely how Pyongyang reacts will be determined, in part by what else happens in the days and

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