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In today's Report:

I. United States

1. ROK President Calls for Strong Defense
2. Alleged DPRK Labor Camps
3. DPRK Famine
4. Plight of DPRK Defectors
5. Taiwan-PRC Relations
6. China Denounces Radio Free Asia
7. US Policy toward East Asia

I. United States

1. ROK President Calls for Strong Defense

United Press International ("S.KOREA'S KIM CALLS FOR VIGILANT DEFENSE," Seoul, 10/1/97) reported that ROK President Kim Young-sam, at a ceremony marking the ROK's 49th Armed Forces Day, discussed issues relating to the ROK's reunification policy and defense posture. "What we pursue is a peaceful reunification of the country and not a war," Kim said. He called for a modern armed force capable of defending the nation against any attack from the DPRK, noting that the DPRK is "still bolstering their military force, even though we are giving them food aid and light-water nuclear reactors with brotherly love."

2. Alleged DPRK Labor Camps

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has ravaged the DPRK in the past two years. The report said political prisoners included those who opposed the political line of the DPRK's ruling Workers Party, the late Kim Il-sung and his son Kim Jong-il. An official at the unification ministry said the government had difficulty confirming details and the exact number of prisoners. [Ed. note: This article is available at http://www.nando.net]

3. DPRK Famine

Reuters ("NEWSPAPER: STARVING NORTH KOREANS TURNING TO CANNIBALISM," Hong Kong, 9/30/97) reported that the South China Morning Post quoted an unnamed former DPRK military officer who fled across the border to the PRC with his family as saying that he witnessed people being executed in his village for cannibalism. "People are going insane with hunger. They even kill and eat their own infants. This kind of thing is happening in many places," the unnamed officer was quoted as telling the newspaper. A 25-year-old student, whose parents are senior figures in the DPRK's Workers' Party, was quoted as saying that at least a million people have starved to death in the country. "This is the figure I've seen reported in Communist Party documents," he said.

4. Plight of DPRK Defectors

The Wall Street Journal (Michael Schuman, "CAPITALISM MIGHT NOT CURE ALL IF NORTH KOREA'S DEMISE PERSISTS," Seoul, 10/2/97) carried an article which discussed the problems that many DPRK defectors have had in adjusting to life in the ROK, s

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4. Plight of DPRK Defectors

The Wall Street Journal (Michael Schuman, "CAPITALISM MIGHT NOT CURE ALL IF NORTH KOREA'S DEMISE PERSISTS," Seoul, 10/2/97) carried an article which discussed the problems that many DPRK defectors have had in adjusting to life in the ROK, suggesting that these experiences highlight the difficulties that ROK and DPRK citizens may have living together in the event of the DPRK's demise and Korean reunification. The article argued that many DPRK defectors, who previously did not have to worry about finding a job or paying for a home, are unprepared for the hard work and instability of the ROK. The article said that DPRK defectors often have trouble adjusting socially as well, particularly if they have no relatives in a society where family ties are paramount. The article argued that with famine reportedly spreading and the economy deteriorating in the DPRK, more and more DPRK citizens will continue escaping to the ROK, and the ROK government will be challenged to find ways to help them adapt to a new society and way of life.

5. Taiwan-PRC Relations

AP-Dow Jones News Service ("TAIWAN PRIME MINISTER URGES CHINA TO RETURN TO TALKS," Taipei, 10/2/97) reported that Taiwanese Premier Vincent Siew urged the PRC Thursday to return to the framework for talks it suspended more than two years ago. Siew told a Cabinet meeting that ending almost 50 years of confrontation between Taiwan and the PRC could be among topics discussed within the format established by landmark initial meetings in 1993, but he ruled out setting any preconditions for talks.

6. China Denounces Radio Free Asia

Reuters (Justin Jin, "CHINA ATTACKS RADIO FREE ASIA AS U.S. MEDDLING," Beijing, 9/30/97) reported that PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Cui Tiankai Tuesday denounced as US meddling congressional bills that would boost funding for radio broadcasts to the PRC and step up monitoring of human rights in the country. "If some Americans are concerned about human rights, they should start with human rights issues in the United States," he said. "The original intention of setting up Radio Free Asia was to use freedom of speech as a reason, or excuse, to interfere in the internal politics of Asian countries," Cui told a regular news briefing, adding that "Asia's freedom is fought out by the people of Asian countries and does not depend on any larger power." The "Radio Free Asia Act of 1997," approved by a US House of Representatives committee Monday, would increase funding for Radio Free Asia and Voice of America broadcasts to the PRC. The committee also approved the "Political Freedom in China Act of 1997" aimed at tightening human rights monitoring, which Cui said reflected double standards. "There does not exist an international judge to say which country's human rights situation is better or worse," he said. Cui deflected a question about whether the PRC would release veteran dissident Wei Jingsheng as a goodwill gesture ahead of President Jiang Zemin's visit to Washington next month for a summit with President Clinton, saying simply that "China and the United States both believe that this visit not only should have important symbolic meaning, but should achieve actual results."

7. US Policy toward East Asia

The US Information Agency's Peggy Hu ("ROTH SAYS VISION OF PACIFIC COMMUNITY IS NOT 'NATO-LIKE' ALLIANCE," Washington, 9/30/97) reported that Stanley Roth, US assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs, told the House International Relations Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific that the US policy framework in the Asia-Pacific region is derived from President Clinton's vision of a Pacific community, an ideal based on shared strength, shared prosperity and shared values. Roth stressed that the US does not envision "a NATO-kind of alliance" focusing on defense, but rather the growth of institutions that encourage political cooperation within

the region. Although the Asia-Pacific region has become increasingly integrated economically, "the political process has not caught up with the economic process," Roth said. Roth cited the annual Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Leaders Meeting, and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) as important confidence-building tools in the region, adding that ARF is "the first venue that we have at government level where we can get together to talk about common perceptions of security threats," Roth said. At the bilateral level, "the U.S.-Japan security treaty is the foundation of American engagement in Asia," he said, stressing that the recently revised guidelines are not directed against any country, but rather "lay out the roles and missions for the U.S.-Japan security relationship." He noted that "The guidelines do not correlate to a specific geographic contingency and do not have a specific geographical definition," adding that peacekeeping and search-and-rescue missions are among the new roles proposed. The US has also offered China the opportunity to participate in trilateral missions with the United States and Japan, Roth said. According to Roth, the upcoming summit meeting between President Clinton and PRC President Jiang Zemin will be an opportunity to discuss a wide variety of issues ranging from trade to non-proliferation and human rights. The United States seeks to "identify areas of common interest" with the PRC while discussing differences and to facilitate the PRC's integration into regional and global institutions, Roth said.

US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright ("SECSTATE AT COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS," USIA Transcript,10/01/97) discussed US policy toward Asia, arguing that the new defense cooperation guidelines signed between the US and Japan "illustrate the strength of US-Japan ties and the reality that those ties remain vital to stability and a boon to the security of all nations in the region." Discussing her meeting last week with PRC Foreign Minister Qian Qichen, to prepare for the upcoming summit in Washington, the Secretary stated that "Any discussion of integration and the future must include China; for China will do much to shape the 21st century." Dismissing calls that the US "should oppose China and seek single-handedly to isolate it from the world community," Albright argued that "effective diplomacy results not from the recitation of principle alone, but from backing principle with realistic policies; from seeing that what is worth achieving is achieved. And with respect to China and the United States, there is much that is worth achieving, and preventing." She cited areas for dialogue with the PRC as "continued cooperation on Korea and nuclear nonproliferation, avoiding miscalculation over Taiwan, encouraging China's entry into the World Trade Organization on commercially viable terms, and improving the prospect that China will respond positively to our concerns about internationally recognized human rights." Arguing that "engagement is not the same as endorsement," the Secretary concluded that "Regardless of the choices we make, China will continue to be a rising force. The history of this century teaches us the wisdom of inviting such a power into the mainstream as a responsible participant in the international system, rather than consigning it prematurely to a divergent path." [Ed. note: See also "US Secretary of State on DPRK Policy" in US Section of Oct. 1 Daily Report]

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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.

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